

# AN ARGUMENT AGAINST FOXHOLES

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 1 | Aired on 10.04.2006

*The Resistance* - A little taste of the hellish vichyssoise in store this season.

## ONE: The Baby Crazies

Day 67 of the New Caprica occupation. People that the Tyrols apparently sometimes have dinner with include: Tigh, Jammer, Duck and his wife Nora. You've not seen Nora before, but you know Duck and Jammer. Jammer's the Deck Crew guy who [fought Cally and Socinus about Letting The Terrorists Win during the witch hunt](#), and also [ended up in that room with all the dead nugget bodies](#); Duck's the blonde Viper pilot who was the only other person in "[Scar](#)." Jammer is religious, Duck is not but his wife is, Tigh believes in the power of doubt and the word "no," Chief Galen Tyrol used to be religious before [Al from Quantum Leap totally blew his mind](#), and Cally is quietly religious.

There are no atheists in foxholes. James Morrow, a genius on many levels, said this was not an argument against atheism so much as it is an argument against foxholes. Meaning that war makes you do terrible things, and get confused about who you are and what you actually believe. I don't care if you believe in God or not but terrible things have a way of making you confused about who you were in the first place, and that's what we're dealing with here: two different arguments about foxholes and about what you do next.

Curfew's in twenty minutes, so everybody's getting their jackets and stuff to leave. Duck says something about ending up in a Cylon jail cell for being out past curfew; Jammer informs us that the first thing the Cylons did when they "showed up to help us" was build a jail. That sounds about right. Baby Nicholas Tyrol starts crying and Nora, Duck's wife, says he's so beautiful. If you say a baby is ugly, you go to hell, so I will say that it is possible that Nora has the Baby Crazies where you wonder if today won't be the day you steal a cute baby in the supermarket because it is cute, but more so perhaps because it is a baby. I don't believe in hell, but I do believe that phylogeny recapitulates lameness, and also that I might really like Cally this season if she will just... do something.

Cally knows about the Baby Crazies and tells them they should have one, and Duck protests that they're working on it. Jammer says this is "great work if you can get it," and everybody laughs, because in a concentration camp nothing is funny anymore. They leave, and Duck makes a joke about how Jammer needs to have "a lady" soon, because he's starting to walk funny. This is because of that medical condition known as Blue Balls, which is a terrifying situation where the backup of semen in the testicles causes you to actually die. At least that's what Coach told us, and if I pass this knowledge on to the ladies it's only because it's of medical interest. Apparently those of us looking for a fight thought this was a gay joke, but come on: there are no gay people on this show. Jammer offers to sleep with Duck's wife through the well-known "if you only had a sister" gambit, and everybody laughs, and then Duck refuses a cigarette because "if they're going to have a baby, they gotta clean up their act." They kiss, which apparently Jammer cannot have, because he brings up a person they know named Longo, who was killed by toasters after they found his weapons stash. Downer, Jammer! I guess Nora won't be getting impregnated tonight.

Back inside the Tyrols' tent, Tigh and Chief talk about how Jammer is trying to recruit Duck to the Resistance. Chief opens up a weapons stash and expresses relief that at least this one stash was still under Longo's latrine. Tigh is allergic to relief, and his Canadian Scots accent he sometimes falls into gets very hardcore. I like him more when he talks like this, like a salty dog. "This is all that's left? This is fracking pathetic. If this keeps up, we'll have nothing but rocks left to throw at the bastards!" Chief's like, "Also nobody to throw the rocks, because we will all be dead, and then it'll just be: rocks."

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Nora can't believe that the Cylons shot this Longo in cold blood, but to be fair, she's been on the show for five seconds. Jammer scoffs that they are saying when they found the stash, he was reaching for a gun. That sounds not unlikely, but Duck is amazed, because Longo, a.k.a. Charlie, would not be stupid enough to do that, so it would seem those frackers murdered him. I feel them on this issue, but I can't help feeling like it's a little silly to be amazed or horrified by Cylons killing your friend. To recap the last two years or so, the Cylons killed ALL YOUR FRIENDS AND ALSO

EVERYBODY, and then put you in a concentration camp. Duck doesn't even have the plausible deniability of his wife, because he's been on this show watching the Cylons kill his friends for two seasons. "My hair being on fire sucks, but I've got this hangnail that is driving me nuts!" On the other hand, if it didn't still piss you off then you might as well lay down and die, I guess. I think the part that I find funny is how they're like, "Cylons are so unsportsmanlike!" Like it's enough to argue with the idea that Longo was reaching for his gun, like if that were true it would be fine that they killed him. Like the Cylons even need a reason. Frankly I think it shows real growth and class for them to even manufacture the gun-pulling story, rather than just being like, "We shot Charlie. It was fun. Go ahead and complain and then we will shoot you too, because that is how we roll. Duh."

Off Nora's line that maybe he was kind of asking for it, hiding weapons in his tent, Duck attacks a recruitment poster for the New Caprica Police: "And now they want us to do their dirty work for them? Are you kidding me?" Jammer, note, is all about the upside there: "Get the Centurions off the streets and let us patrol them ourselves? Maybe Charlie would still be still be alive if they had human..." Duck tells him to shut right up: "You work for the toasters, it's treason." He tosses it to the ground with a weird look and remembers curfew; Jammer manufactures a reason to head back to the Tyrol house. He kisses Nora and shakes Duck's hand, and when he's gone they discuss making him their child's godfather.

Cally puts the baby to bed as Chief worries that they won't have an "effective fighting force" put together by the time Big Daddy comes down to rescue them from space, putting Tigh in a bind because A) he believes more fervently than anyone that Adama will always save his ass, but B) he hates hope. So he changes the subject and notes that the guns have to stay in the Tyrol tent for the moment. Cally and Chief are both not feeling this, but Tigh has no time for their family or their baby: "We'll move them as soon as we can." Jammer comes in and confirms that Duck hates the Cylons, but that's all he's got to offer. Tigh reminds us -- and Kat said this before -- that Duck is an awesome Viper pilot with forty kills. "Talk to him, make him understand that we need him! Throw in some poetic crap about the struggle for liberty against the Cylon oppressors, whatever it takes!"

I'm of two minds about Tigh in this little story -- on the one hand I agree with him, because the one thing I've always loved about him and about his wife too is that he doesn't give a fuck beyond getting whatever it is accomplished. On the other hand, you're not really in a position to be cynical about the fact that you have no hope and that "poetic crap" is all any of you have to hold onto. I see him putting the cart just a tad before the horse as far as all this, which is at odds to the fact that he really does believe Bill is going to save his bacon just like always. Putting the cherry on top of his total insensitivity to Baby Nicholas sleeping on top of a gunnery: "We need more people or this resistance movement is going to die in its crib." Classy! We cut before getting to see Cally and Chief be absolutely appalled at his mentioning crib death in front of their baby.

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## **TWO: Being Gross In Church**

Duck, Jammer, and Chief hang around a water tower, discussing the Resistance. Duck says that, as much as he'd love kicking "some chrome-plated ass" with them, he's got other plans. Like having a baby with the clearly marked for death Nora, for example. He bounces, and Jammer sighs. Chief -- who has no room to talk considering the last person he beat the shit out of married him for it -- is like, "Other plans what?" And Jammer spells out that he's talking about Nora. "So what! I've got a wife and a kid -- you don't think I worry about them? What kind of a future are we gonna leave them if we just lay down and quit?! That's just a spineless excuse." Also valid. I love the Chief.

Jammer says it's a matter of choice, and that they're still entitled to choose their level of involvement in life and revolution. Chief is not feeling him at all on this issue. But see, Chief's got a history of strength when it comes to this stuff, and a hell of a lot of practice subdividing love and fear, and giving up your dreams of the future in order to survive, and to help. They're both right, but Chief is slightly more right because he's already taken Option A, namely choosing your dreams of a happy future v. giving everything you've got to ensure the future, and it didn't work out, but now he's got both. He's already worked through the pain and shame of taking Duck's option, and of all things he's worked this one out for himself. If you take the Boomer situation and

substitute Nora in, Duck's choice is clear: humanity, then romance. Bros before hos.

Inside the Temple tent, Jammer and Tigh are worshipping with Jean Barclay. Or so it would seem. Being an atheist, or not, in a foxhole, is a very different kind of thing than being a killer, or not, in a church. An opposite kind of thing, and the heart of this entire ten-part story. I support Jean Barclay -- she was one of the Buccaneer group in the original [Caprica Resistance](#), the gorgeous scary redhead -- but compared to the Galactica people, I give her a lot more moral scratch paper. She was in the Shit, left behind when the Fleet jumped away, and she has been exposed to radiation, and had to hang out with Anders, and went from just a person to a guerilla in two seconds flat, and she survived. Compared to her, the regular cast is a bunch of pansies.

So they pray: "We give thanks for the food you have presented us. May this harvest be spared the blight. So say we all," they say. The priestess leaves, and Jean goes into the real deal: "We picked up all the weapons from the other sites. They're in crates marked 'Machine Parts.'" Which I question only because what if the Cylons thought that meant, like, hair extensions, and then the jig would be up. Jammer realizes she's talking about smuggling the weapons into the Temple itself, and wigs, because he's religious. Jean does not understand the problem, because that one time he was drowning in dead bodies up on Galactica was, like, a normal Tuesday to her. She's in a different world entirely. She blows up coffee shops! For kicks!

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"This is sacred ground," Jammer says. It's something he believes both in the personal and in the political realm: "The Cylons respect that. Which is why we should leave the temple alone." Tigh points out that this makes it the perfect hiding place, and Jammer's not buying: "But it's sacrilege!" Tigh -- and again, I'm on his side to a certain extent, but only because he didn't start out religious -- tells him to say a prayer for forgiveness, then, and take the pussy party somewhere else. The problem I have is that this is very similar in a lot of ways to [the Pegasus problem](#), which is that it's not so much an objective moral issue as the fact that you, yourself, are having to change your own moral code. Rape a robot or not, but you're only getting off on it if you don't really

think it's a robot, and that's gross. In the same way, it's either a church or just another tent, depending on how religious you are, but you can't ask somebody else to turn off their feelings about it without going way over the line. Especially when that includes the enemy, and their reverence for your religion is what creates the dilemma. So it's like double sacrilege? But also, since that's not logically defensible and I yell about it in like every recap: It's a slippery slope issue. You can't let war change who you are, or what you believe. Jammer is being forced to choose, and it's not a choice he should have to make.

### **THREE: Who's In The Temple & Why**

Nora prays in the Duck & Nora tent: "If it pleases you, great Aphrodite, grant us a child." Or Artemis, or Hera. Maybe the problem is that Nora doesn't know her own religion. Or maybe the problem is that the Gods don't want her pregnant: "If it pleased her, you'd be pregnant already," Duck smiles, and she says maybe if he'd come to Temple with her they'd be pregnant. None of which makes any sense, theologically, but I bet in a concentration camp there's a lot of confusion about what the Gods are actually up to. "The Gods help those who help themselves," says Duck, which to me at least proves that, religious or not, he's got the high ground on the rest of these people. Nora throws her shirt in his face and tells him to get to work then. They are very cute. Duck tells her that Jammer and Chief tried to recruit him to the Resistance, and she confirms that he turned them down, thank the Gods, and they reiterate for each other that chrome-plated ass-kissing does not hold a candle to Duck's clearly marked for death bride. He jumps into bed with her and they are adorable some more. Get it while you can, Duck.

Chief, Tigh, Jammer, and Jean are hiding weapons in the Temple, and Jammer does indeed pray for forgiveness from the Gods. Tigh gives him that look he gives people, but come on: this is gross. Even if you're not religious, you have to admit that this is gross.

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Next morning Nora slaps Duck's ass and screams, "Reveille!" He twitches and wiggles around and complains that he "left all that military crap aboard Galactica." She gives him some coffee and tells him he's already late, and Chief's going to kick his ass. I love



this so much, this role that Chief has taken -- even in "Lay Down Your Burdens" it made me happy, because a political system is just another machine, and "Galen" means "Physician."

Nora asks Duck to maybe meet her at Temple after work, and Duck protests: "I don't do Temple. I don't need all the bells and whistles. I talk to the Gods in my own way." She's not happy about it, but he smiles winsomely and says he'll be there "in spirit." They kiss and she tells him to leave, but he begs for just five more minutes in bed. Happy couples are all the same.

So what's developing is a story about who's in the Temple and why: you're either in the Temple for God, or not in the Temple, or you're in the Temple for horrible reasons. But it's a truth about life, and about war, and especially about this show, that the people who do the crimes are rarely the people who pay for the crimes, at first blush. So if Cally and Nora are the only people in the story who go to Temple for pure reasons, then one of them is going to bite it, and we've only just met Nora, and Cally -- apparently -- has still not been put through enough hell, so Nora is, clearly, marked for death. But the corollary to that is that the actual people perverting the temple -- Tigh and Chief -- are going to be fine, and Jammer is going to be fine because he's on the middle ground of that spectrum, and Duck is going to be fine so that his wife can be horribly killed and this will radicalize him and prove the importance of the Resistance. Which, if this is the best behavior the Resistance can scrounge up, is pretty gross, but humanity always has the fractional moral high ground over the Cylons, because that's how the show works.

#### **FOUR: Nora Dies Horribly With Some Celery**

In the Temple with Cally, Baby Nick, and Nora. Cally writes her prayer on a piece of paper, lights it on fire, and places it in a metal bowl. What a lovely ritual. Nora holds Baby Nick, because she still has the Baby Crazies. Nora chats about how Galen's from a religious background, so that's lucky for Cally, while Duck's belief is more personal and he won't go to Temple. Cally blows Chief's spot about yes, he's from a religious background, but the whole Brother Cavil thing, how he turned out a Cylon (and an atheist!) was not that awesome for Chief's religious impulses. Nora's like, "At least Baby Nick gets baptized," and Cally calls this a small miracle. "It's the small ones that keep me going," says

Nora, and that makes me love her an awful lot. Even though, like all the women that don't constantly kill people on this show, she's just a cipher for her male counterpart with all the depth the actress can bring to the part. And no, I'm not bitching about Cally exactly, because at this point Cally is fine. But, like, it would be fucking splendid if they could, I don't know, spell Kandyse McClure's name properly in the credits. For starters. On the way to giving her personality back. Or ever show a relationship -- or a conversation -- between two women, maybe.

Oh, here's one: They talk about celery. Nora and Cally have a conversation about celery, and Goodwife Duck says she got Goodwife Tyrol some celery, and Goodwife Tyrol says "Thanks!" and then somebody starts shouting at the Cylons outside that they are "infidels," and Doral, outside, tells him to shut it, and then Nora and Cally run out of the Temple, but then Nora has to run back inside for the celery, and then she dies horribly, and then there's just her dead hand, covered in blood, holding a stalk of celery. I don't think it's supposed to be funny.

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## **FIVE: Duck Has A Crisis With Some Celery**

Cally brings Nora's bag of celery to Duck's tent, and sits beside him on the bed. Chief and Jammer loiter near the tent flap. Cally tells him Nora didn't say anything, because she died horribly fast, but on the upside, she didn't suffer. Cally and Duck are both very good in this scene, as usual. Duck barfs, and Cally tries to comfort him. He rues the whole thing about how she asked him to come to Temple and he wouldn't go with her, and there's not much to say to that beyond the fact that he wouldn't have been able to help in any way. "Could have died with her," Duck murmurs, and Jammer starts in with that "will of the Gods" shit, which always sounds like a good idea inside your head but is NEVER a good idea to say out loud, which Duck proves impressively by wiggling out and suggesting that the Gods go fuck themselves, since they're the ones that killed her. (Still not true.) He smashes their house altar, and grabs a picture of the two of them, whirling on Chief.

"Were there guns at the temple?" Chief wriggles around the question and says it doesn't matter, because the toasters thought



there were. And then she pulled a stalk of celery on them, and it all went to hell. Chief finally admits that they were grossly hiding weapons in the Temple, and Duck tells him to leave. Jammer stays behind to spread some more cheer, and Duck tells him loudly to leave as well. Cally takes off, too, and Duck continues to stare at the picture.

## **SIX: Tigh Versus The Crybabies**

Jammer, Jean, and Tigh are building something as Jammer wigs out about the massacre at the Temple. Ten dead, twelve wounded. Tigh's like, "I know! Lucky, right?" Sigh. Jammer has a problem with this concept, even as Tigh notes that it'll do wonders for recruitment. Nonprofits are so scary. Jammer exposts that they're doing random arrests and cracking down, and Jean says that a whole thousand people protested outside Colonial One after the massacre. Jean says there've been 150 new recruits in the three days since, and Tigh calls this a "hell of a bargain for a few confiscated weapons." Sometimes I think it's too easy to make Tigh the one to say stuff. Like he becomes less believable when you convince yourself, as a writer, that Tigh could actually be this crazy. Jammer points out the collateral damage of the ten innocents: "Why don't you tell Duck what a bargain you got for Nora's life."

Tigh retreats to a certain kind of logic, which is that the Resistance didn't shoot the churchgoers, the "chrome jobs" did... which, while true, is still not the point. It's not even the point that it was bad strategy: it's crappiness on a higher moral level. Not only did you endanger innocents, but you crapped on God. That's just bad form. "Hey! We're not playing patty-cake here. These bastards burned up twenty billion of us. You gonna say that's our fault too?" (Sort of yes?) "Instead of bawling like a little girl you should focus on getting some payback." I take it back, I think maybe Tigh really is this crazy. And without Bill around, we've seen him get this crazy, and maybe I should go back and watch those episodes again, because he is making more sense than usual, even as he's making less. "Is that all this is about to you? Blood for blood?" Tigh just says that war is messy, and people get killed: "Good people, nice people. Get that through your head or get out. We don't need any crybabies in this outfit."

Hey, remember when Tigh almost shit himself because Admiral Cain scared him so bad? It was kind of comforting to know there were lines he wouldn't cross.

### **SEVEN: Literally Drinking The Literal Kool-Aid**

People are walking through the streets of horrible, awful New Caprica life. Still looking like Burning Man, still smelling like burning garbage. Tigh and Chief are doing some kind of work and Tigh is bitching about "Of all the people for the toasters to grab, it had to be Jammer." He calls him a "little frack" and worries that he'll give up the whole deal. Which is not too weird of him, actually: Jammer's twitchy, and he's also a pushover, and willing to snitch on his fellow man if he thinks they're bad guys. Just like the NCP! Way to tie in that character continuity! That is awesome. He's so joining the NCP, I bet. Chief says Jammer's a pain in the ass, but not a traitor, and Tigh says something encouraging and hopeful.

New Caprica Detention Center, the first building the Cylons made. Jammer paces an interrogation cell and yells at himself about how he's completely fracked. Doral enters in the usual game-show-host teal jacket. "Sorry to keep you waiting. Have a seat, if you would?" Jammer asks what he wants; Doral slides him a big bottle of red Kool-Aid, then takes out a knife and slits the cuffs around his wrists. "Can I call you James? Or do you prefer Jammer?" That depends, am I over the age of ten?

Doral apologizes on the cuffs and says that was totally unnecessary. "Can you tell me why I was arrested?" Doral explains that he's not under arrest, he's there to have a conversation about the missing three thousand... wrong webisodes. He's there to talk about the Temple massacre.

### **EIGHT: S.O.L.**

Jammer is not feeling this conversation: "All I know about the Temple is that you blew ten innocent people to pieces." Doral says, though it may be hard to believe -- and it is -- the Cylons feel just sick about it. He blames the Centurions, but what, are they going to take offense? They're walking toasters for real. "But I think if you're honest with yourself, you'll admit that the shooting wasn't entirely our fault." Jammer calls this "bullcrap,"

always funny, and Doral reminds him that they've always left the Temples alone. Jammer repeats Tigh's thing about how, guns in the Temple aside, it was still Cylons that killed the people and bloodied the celery. "True. And I accept full responsibility for that. But bringing instruments of death into a house of worship is a sin. Don't you agree?" Seriously!

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Jammer takes a big old motherfucking sip of the Kool-Aid.

"Think about it, James. Whoever hid those weapons in there must have known we'd catch wind of it. Maybe they even leaked the information to us. Maybe they wanted it to happen." Oh, damn. This just got very interesting, actually. I might like a sip of that myself, there, Jammer. "Because some people are afraid of peace. Afraid to stop fighting. Afraid of what they might be without it. But you're not one of those people, are you James? You'd like to put all this bloodshed behind you. Get a place of your own one day, a farm maybe. A wife, kids, a life." Doral tells him this is possible: for Jammer, for Doral, for everybody.

Doral spins some poetic crap that is at least as good as the revolutionary poetic crap: "Individuals like you and I have to be brave enough to demonstrate there is a better way. Others are already doing it. That juice comes from farms right here on New Caprica where Cylons and humans are working together. Growing things, instead of killing each other. The power grid is almost complete. So is the water system, thanks to your engineering teams and ours." Sounds great until he hits the clincher: "And when we can finally have human beings policing the streets instead of Centurions..."

Jammer stands up and yells about how I was wrong and no way is he joining [the S.O.L.](#) or the NCP or whatever you wanna call it. "That's never going to happen, I'm not a frackin' collaborator." Doral questions his terms: "All I'm asking is that you help me prevent another tragedy like the Temple shooting." How? With this little keycard microchip, which Jammer can show at the gate of the Detention Center and they'll let him in immediately. "If you hear of anything that could lead to more bloodshed, get a hold of me. Maybe the two of us can find a way to stop more innocent people from being killed."

Doral takes off, leaving the door open, and Jammer stares at the keycard. I don't know: "they have a plan" and all that. I think this is one case where you have to impute a certain amount of creepiness no matter how delicious and refreshing the Kool-Aid is.

## **NINE: Boomer Told Me**

Chief's waiting for Jammer when he comes out of the Detention Center. The gates are automatic and for a second I got excited thinking about how maybe the jail was alive, like a Raider, and how maybe all of that stuff is alive, like the Basestars and the Resurrection Ships and all. I think I could deal with Cylon jail a lot easier if it was alive, for some reason. You could say, "Hi," and sing little songs to it, and maybe feel peaceful. I don't know what I'm talking about. That Kool-Aid was strong.

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Chief, surprisingly, says that he knew Jammer was being released because Boomer told him. (What if DEMAND LOVE is actually completely different from the Kill You With Kindness occupation? No, wait, because the Six that Gaius surrendered to was obviously the DEMAND LOVE Six from Caprica City. Dammit.) Anyway, that is awesome. I love that Chief and Boomer are talking -- working? -- together. I cannot wait to see more of that. I'm sure Cally would love it. She and Dualla could have little bitter parties about it. "Some skin job all over me about the Temple massacre, the weapons, who, what, where. You know, the usual stuff. Just like you'd expect." He confirms for Chief that he told Doral to go frack himself, which is... not true. They talk about how awesome the look on his face was, when this thing that didn't happen happened, and Jammer's like, "He was one pissed-off toaster," and I don't like this because it makes Chief look kinda dumb, or else he's not buying this story. It's complicated! The last thing you see in this scene is a NCP recruitment poster, though, so if Chief is paying attention to the camera work then he knows the truth.

Duck walks into his tent and slowly puts the altar back together. The last piece is the picture of him and Nora. He picks up an idol, presumably Aphrodite, and weeps for his wife and the child and the future that they never had, and the tenuous faith he never acted on. All gone forever.

## **TEN: Aries & Apollo**

Raiders fly over New Caprica City as Nicholas Steven Tyrol -- with his parents, Jammer and Duck, and Jean standing by -- is dedicated to the service of Aries and Apollo. If I were a Colonist or a refugee baby, those would be my choice too. "May he prove worthy of their blessings, and those of mighty Zeus. So say we all." Everybody claps and the baby wets himself. Cally and Chief are very cute together, and then Duck interrupts everything and Chief's like, "Sorry, I have a baby. What do you want?"

Off on the side, Duck flashes Chief a NCP patch; predictably, this causes Chief to go nuts. "You're gonna work for the toasters after they killed Nora?" Duck figured out what Doral figured out but I was too dumb to figure out: that some motherfracker obviously snitched about the weapons stash in the Temple. "If I join them maybe I can find out who." Chief recognizes that this is dangerous work, and welcomes him to the fight. At no point does Chief show any surprise about how there's a stoolie in the Resistance, so again: is Chief being sketchy, or is Chief being dumb, or is Chief going double-agent on Duck and not trusting him but pretending that he's still in the Resistance? Duck and Jammer! You are confusing me! He tells him to be careful, and Duck leaves. I hope he is careful.

Tigh and Jean are all geared up about their next major hit, what with all the new recruits. Jean says Anders found a source of ammonium nitrate. I guess from his sickbed? And Tigh's like, "What's the best place to turn it into bombs?" Jean thinks probably... what's worse than the Temple? Oh right: the grain storage tent across the street from the hospital. She might just be creepier than Tigh. I thought the stoolie was obviously Tigh but now I just don't know. Jammer calls bullshit on this plan, due to possibly blowing up hospital patients, and Tigh interrupts him and says the patients can take their chances. I love that: "Sucks to be your tuberculosis! No crybabies in this outfit!" Jammer bounces to check on Duck, he says, but mostly I think he wants away from the dangerous murder cult of Tigh and Jean. Oh, not to mention how this is exactly what Doral was just talking about a second ago.

Outside, Duck's smoking a cigarette and looking down at his NCP patch. The two things -- the three things -- he wouldn't do because he loved Nora. Jammer pulls out a smoke and Duck wordlessly hands him his own, to light it. "Thought you quit?" asks Jammer, just in case we forgot the first webisode. "What frackin' difference does it make now?" Duck mumbles. Good point. They smoke and are very quiet.

So there's Duck, okay, who was not religious but lost his family to the Temple atrocity, and now he's joined the collaborationists in order to expose the Resistance member who was willing to leverage the deaths of the Temple folk against recruitment. And there's Jammer, who is religious but went along with the Temple atrocity, and now regrets it, and will probably end up actually being a collaborator. And there's rhetoric on both sides that is simultaneously disgusting and pretty right on. And there's the Cylons, who say they want to work together, and there's the Resistance, who... I'm not clear what they want, actually. Big Daddy Adama to come save them from space, I said, but also to be spies and act creepy and blow up civilians and hurt people.

The legal mind says that Duck is at least working within the system, whereas Jammer is working around the system, which is dicey. I don't know. They both of them lose pretty hardcore -- again, some more -- I guess. But Duck is more adaptable than Jammer, generally, and he's in a much more direct situation, and I think that's what is going to fuck Jammer up: having to think on his feet. Because there's no task list for Jammer's story like there is for Duck's: just a continuing edge he has to walk and remember at any time that he may be making the wrong choice. He actually has to spend every second choosing between the Resistance and actual collaboration, whereas Duck just has to be several men at once. I think it would be better for everybody if the situations were reversed, but I don't know if I have any real strong backup for that opinion beyond the fact that even in the foxhole, Duck's way more of an atheist than Jammer can be trusted to stay true to the Resistance. Duck's a pilot so he has pilot stories, Jammer's got deck stories. Duck's story from here on out, it seems, is a detective story, but Jammer's is closer to an existential one, and I don't trust those bitches.

But also I feel like it really does go back to the Pegasus thing, which is that -- see, here I go quoting existentialism -- it's more



important that you stay yourself, true to the thing you've declared, because that's all you have. Period. Like, I don't have a problem with Jean, because she's doing her thing, and I don't have a problem with Chief, because he's Chief. Cally's still Cally. Tigh's like Tigh with a little extra Tigh on top. The only people who have been seriously changed in this story are of course Duck and Jammer, and Duck's still Duck. He didn't go all foxhole religious or anything; he just resumed smoking and got a little more Jean-like. Duck had his support taken away, when Nora died, but Jammer handed his over the second he signed on to desecrate the Temple. And I don't know if that's a big difference or a small one, but it seems big to me, ethically speaking.

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Duck puts his hand on Jammer's shoulder and tells him to take it easy, and they smile. Duck walks away, and Jammer finishes his cigarette. He pulls out Doral's keycard, looks at it a while... and heads down the middle of the street, toward the first building the Cylons ever built.

# THE PART THAT STAYS FREE

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 1 | Aired on 10.05.2006

*Occupation* - Everybody works overtime to find a way to survive and stay human, mostly failing or screwing it up; Gaeta and Chief finally make contact with the Fleet overhead; a rescue begins to take shape.

**Recaplet:** The occupation is four months in. Chief's insurgent group is running wild, blowing things up, and having a fabulous time. Tigh has been in detention for a while in Cylon jail, but he is released after Ellen hate-fucks Brother Cavil. The Resistance also has a mysterious contact within the Baltar administration who is not mysterious at all, because it's obviously Gaeta. Up in space, Lee's Towel makes a hideous reappearance, as does his nasty estrangement with his dad. Dualla is pretty cool and kind of tired of his whining. The Fleet is crappy even with Kat as CAG and Helo as Adama's XO. Roslin's still teaching and helping with the insurgents, and keeping a diary. Kara has been living in a house-like cell with Leoben, who's as culty as ever and is keeping her as a pet. She kills him for the fifth time over a lovely steak dinner, and would seem to have lost her entire mind. Sharon Agathon is now BFF with Bill Adama, and begs him to forgive himself for leaving during the occupation. DEMAND LOVE is getting not a whole lot of traction with the other Cylons, but there's still a lot of dissent among the Cylon ranks as far as what is actually the best plan of action. Cavil thinks they're all being big babies because they're scared of God; Boomer thinks they have a chance to synthesize both cultures and create a new utopia; Six is so confused she's fighting herself; Doral believes in smarm but now looks more like Lee than Lee does; Leoben is off being culty and creepy; and Three still hasn't done the yi-yi-yi. Contact is made with the Fleet after Gaeta passes Chief some radio frequency info, and that part is pretty misty-making in the eye area. Tigh is now fully nuts but making more sense than ever with his "this is this" and "that is that" approach to morality. Helo has gotten even hotter somehow, and the concentration camp life is really agreeing with Cally, who looks lovelier all the time. Jammer has joined the SS for real, and Duck has joined the SS in order to become a suicide bomber. Which he does, blowing up at the SS graduation ceremony under orders from Tigh in a room full of Cylons and graduates.

**Recap:** Spotlight on the Cylons, images of them acting creepy as we learn that they evolved, there are many copies, and they have a plan. Previously, [Leoben was scary and cultish, and was very obsessed with Starbuck](#). [Lee was promoted](#) to the command of the Pegasus, with Dualla as his XO. A new planet was found and named [New Caprica](#), and its settlement was the platform that won Gaius Baltar the Presidency of the Colonies, because everybody was awfully tired. Colonel Saul Tigh and his wife Ellen loved each other very much, but in a way that was fracked. Duck and Nora loved each other in a way we don't know about at all, and [then she died](#). After a year of the settlement on New Caprica, the Cylons were summoned by Gina's [last middle finger](#), and Lee talked his father Bill into taking the remains of the Fleet out of orbit. Baltar surrendered the planet to the Cylons, and humanity became inmates in a concentration camp as big as the world, and Leoben came and found Kara.

Tigh sits in a jail cell, curled and skinny, scrabbling with his hands and fingers. Ellen kind of graphically bones a mystery man, her hands on his chest. Laura Roslin lights a candle with her hands, praying for salvation. Chief Galen Tyrol builds a bomb with his hands. Bill Adama plays out war scenarios on the model table, moving Vipers and Basestars with his hands. And in a strange apartment, Kara fights another battle, arranging plates and forks for dinner. Placing them exactly. Saul's hands scratch out a calendar mark on his cell wall. His eye is gone. He scuttles like a spider. The man Ellen's fucking rises and falls; his face is on the other side of a giant brandy snifter. Her face is infinitely tired and sad. Roslin prays, with all the grace and strength she can muster. Adama slides a ship into position; dashes all the tiny ships across space in frustration. The poundy drums come in as Chief and Anders affix their bomb upon a wall. Kara sits and raises a fork before her eyes; one tine goes ting. Everything is perfect.

The door of Tigh's cell creaks and Saul cowers against the wall, to cover his calendar. Brother Cavil enters, sits astride a chair, puts on mirrorshades, clears his throat, and laughs at him. "Do you know that every time they take you out of this cell we come in here and we change those little hash marks? On your little calendar there, that you're trying to hide?" Tigh's face is reflected back in the glasses. What's left of it. He smells like shit and torture. Somewhere Cavil is fucking his wife, getting off on her hatred. He smiles down at Tigh, who is small.

Leoben brings Kara: potatoes, gravy, "even some carrots." From the farms that represent a beautiful future for Cylon and human alike, somewhere far away. She sits at the table and a heavy raider flies over, shaking the house. Leoben smiles and she stares back; he sits down and she stares back. Her hair is very long and she looks very beautiful and very empty. She looks down reverently as he begins to pray to his scary alien God: "Heavenly Father, we thank You for the bounty of this table... "

Ellen fucks Cavil hard and calls him a son of a bitch; his cries are loud and not anything I was ever interested in hearing. He laughs grossly as she climbs off and pulls her panties up.

Chief and Anders are in a port or something, the Heavy Raider sound carrying us from scene to scene and landing here. They behind some junk and watch her come down.

Kara watches Leoben begin to eat; he notices and looks at her. "I need a knife," she says quietly, ashamed. He comes around the table and cuts her steak for her, like a child. She stares up. "Thank you." He finishes and looks at her tiny smile. "You're welcome." She watches his hands.

Ellen's dressed, face all fracked up, back to Cavil, who assures her he quite enjoyed that. She smiles hatefully, seductively. "I'm so glad." Without turning around: "... And when do I get what I want?" Right now, he says. She'll trade that thing she gives freely for the part of her that stays free, no matter how broken he's become. She's the only person I approve of this week. Which is generally how it goes, with Ellen and me.

Cavil taps his hands upon the chair, looking down at Tigh with his glasses on. "We reviewed your case today, and I must say there was great disappointment on the review committee." Tap tap tap. He drags -- not carries -- the chair out, leaving Tigh in a beam of light, in the corner, all alone. The door's still open; Tigh looks at it and Cavil jumps back into the doorway; Tigh flinches with his entire body. "Colonel, come on. I'm not going to hold this door open forever." He stands; he can hardly walk. Outside, his wife waits for him. She spots him and shouts his name, running to him with all the love and care she can muster. The ways she can show him how much she loves him, when so much of what she's done

for him must be secret. She cries out, "What did they do to you?" He shakes his head: "I'm out. That's all that matters." They limp home.

In the bay, Chief and Anders watch a Six and an Eight, looking around creepily as they walk toward a Raider; there are Centurions everywhere. "Now," says Anders, low, and the bomb doesn't immediately go off. They stress out; eventually it connects and blows the Raider and the Cylons to hell. They cheer: "galen" means "physician" but this is surgery. This is the part of him that stays free. This is the part of Anders that kept him alive for a year. Ellen and Tigh watch from the center of town as black smoke rises, beyond the detention center.

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"Fracking insurgents," Leoben says, standing at the window with the knife still in his hands. He comes back around the table and stands at her side, looking at her face. "You look so lovely tonight," he says, smiling pathetically. He touches her face and she doesn't react; she pulls a pair of knitting needles from beneath her seat cushion. They go all the way through his neck and out the other side. She pushes him, choking and gasping, to the floor, and climbs on top. She stabs him over and over, finally leaving the needles in his chest. As he's dying, she leans in, her hair hanging down, framing his face. "I'll see you soon, Kara," he gasps. "Take your time," she grunts. She wipes his blood off on the carpet, palm down and then the back. She sits back down at the table, hands covered in his blood, and practically hums as she cuts herself a piece of steak and daintily wipes her mouth. This is not at all the most fucked-up thing that is going to happen to her this week, but it's a strong first move in that particular competition.

When they found New Caprica they just wanted to rest: Kara was tired of the bullshit with Lee and Dualla, so she settled down with her true love Anders and became a wife. Laura was tired of the bullshit with Gaius, so she settled down with Maya and the baby and went back to being a teacher. Chief was tired of the bullshit with his suicidal ideation and leftover feelings about Boomer and Sharon, so he settled down with Cally and became a father. Tigh was tired of the bullshit with the war and he was tired, so he settled down with his wife and tried to figure out their marriage

for the first time. Gaius was tired of the burden of having engineered the genocide of humanity, and so he left Gina behind and let himself believe he was a hero: the leader of the first generation of the next human world. They were so tired. They just wanted to lay down their burdens for a little while, and they all got what they wanted. For a year. And now it's become more true than true, extending into delirious and sickening madness: Kara's wife and mother to something so much worse than Anders, trapped in a sick parody of the life she tried to construct for herself. Laura's reduced herself to a position of no power at all, and only watches and tries to help the Resistance without falling into its craziness herself. Chief's life is about to get simplified up with a quickness, and nothing he does can help the settlement stay clean. Tigh's marriage is doing better than ever before, as long as he doesn't allow himself to notice that his wife is hate-fucking evil robots. And Gaius is about to fuck things up so bad that even he can't write it off as heroism.

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It's the 134th day of the Occupation, Laura writes on Marsday. Which is fitting, she says, because perpetual war is the only possibility. She lists her prayers: "I refuse to believe Adama has abandoned us," she says. Though the insurgents' attacks sometimes seem futile, they are still critical for morale and for the existence of hope on New Caprica. That reminder of the possibility of resistance. The next step is to hit a "high-profile target," obviously a human target, but she's thinking around and not about that: they can't really kill the Cylons, because they don't die. They resurrect themselves to "walk among us," she says, calling this "horrifying." And the Occupation authority continues, in complete control.

The voice-over goes on and on forever but doesn't really tell you anything you didn't know. It's so nice to hear her voice. Three (the Xena one) walks towards Colonial One as Roslin utters Baltar's name with intense disgust: his leadership is in name only. Three joins a parliament of Cylons in Gaius's office on Colonial One: Cavils, Dorals, Threes, Sixes and Eights. Cavil lectures them: "Let's review why we're here, shall we?" Everybody's got a different shade of meaning here, though. Cavil sees it humorously: they're on New Caprica to bring the word of God to the people, to save the humans from damnation by bringing



them the love of God. DEMAND LOVE speaks up: Caprica Six -- remember, Gaius's baby-snapping lover back in the Colonies -- fairly spits at this. "We're here because a majority of the Cylon felt that the slaughter of mankind had been a mistake." Boomer -- remember, Chief's old Brokeback lover that was killed by his new one -- agrees: "We're here to find a new way to live in peace, as God wants us to live." Cavil agrees that it's been a fun ride, but he -- and for our benefit, since the Cylons have never really made any sense at all, which is what's so awesome about religious imperialism -- wants to "clarify our objectives." Please. Three and Doral, who seem to be leaders a lot of the time, look at each other.

"It follows," says a Cavil, "that we should employ any means necessary. Fear is a key article of faith, as I understand it," he says, and offers that their primary goal, given the insurgency, should be to put fear into the hearts and minds of the human population. DEMAND LOVE is not feeling this. Cavil turns suddenly and points at Gaius, who's been at his desk this whole time, useless. "Let's execute Gaius Baltar," he says. "WHAT?" screams Gaius; I'm saying let's hear him out.

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Everybody looks at Gaius and then stares at each other. "That's not gonna happen," says Caprica, and Cavil smiles at her: "Just because he's your favorite toy," he says, it shouldn't interfere with "the larger issues." Gaius tries to get sassy about how he's been very good at cooperating, and Caprica stares Three down: "Gaius is with me. Anyone who wants to challenge that will have to deal with me." It makes Three sad. Doral speaks up, saying it wouldn't help. "If we'd killed him at the beginning, it might have worked." Another Doral explains that now all the humans hate him, as a traitor, and would cheer his death. I really, really like Doral this season. Not only is he funny and mean, but he got all of Lee's surplus cuteness. Cavil's like, "Okay, not Gaius, but maybe some insurgent leaders? Or random people from the street? We could execute them in public!" Cavil is so fucking scary. "The insurgency stops now, or we start reducing the human population to a more manageable size. Say, less than a thousand." Dang.

Boomer raises her voice, saying that no, what they "need" to do

is stop being butchers and creeps, and Caprica reminds everybody that the entire point of coming here was to start a new way of life, again. "To push past the conflict that separated us from the humans for so long!" Cavil laughs and says they're all living in a fantasy world if they think that's possible; he giggles at the irony of "delusional machines." I love how he's the only one that can mention that shit openly. "By the way, bitches? We're totally robots!" They've really done a good job with giving these seven (twelve) factions voices and consistent viewpoints on the occupation. That's, like, impossible, but they pulled it off. Cavils and Dorals take off, and Three pulls Caprica aside to ask her if "the love of that man" is worth losing all this. Instead of laughing and saying "all what, exactly," which is what I said, she just says that if Three had ever experienced love, she wouldn't have to ask. Three makes a sad thinky face, and it occurs to me that she is going to end up going five times as crazy as anybody else on this show. And it is going to be awesome.

Roslin explains to us about the New Caprica Police and how despicable she finds it -- "humans doing the dirty work of the Cylons" -- over images of them suiting up. Some of them, she worries, are people -- like Jammer -- you might least expect. "Hundreds have been rounded up, held, questioned, tortured... others have simply vanished." But, we're told, a mysterious contact "within Baltar's administration" has been flipping over the food bowl of a dog named Jake (shout-out!) and leaving clearly labeled information in a secret place. Since "Baltar's administration" amounts to: Felix Gaeta, I don't know why the episode wants it to be a secret. Sometimes it doesn't feel like it does, actually, so it's confusing. "Thank the Gods for those that fight. They have everything to lose, and little hope of something to gain." Resistance, anything but submission: Roslin knows instinctively how you stay free.

Under this latest voice-over, Chief grabs the info from the secret place: clearly labeled security plans for the NCP graduation ceremony. He heads home, where Cally -- looking very beautiful -- lies in bed with their baby. A bright wooden mobile hangs down over his crib. "Sometimes," she says, looking down at Baby Nick in her arms, "I hate everything about this place, but sometimes it's magic." She kisses Chief and he nuzzles her shoulder. After a moment of peace he sighs: "Gotta go. Couple of hours." She is frightened and voices her fear that one day, he won't come back.

Just vanish, and she'll never see him again, and Baby Nick will never know his father. She's spent this entire series afraid that Chief will disappear. I give her credit for that. He promises he'll come back, and leaves, and she lies with the baby, holding his tiny hand in hers.

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Under a pallet, under a carpet, into a trapdoor and down a ladder, into a hidden dark bunker, Tigh joins Anders and the Chief. They drink nasty hooch and welcome Tigh back. Over his head, Chief and Anders OMG about the patch over Tigh's eye. "I know you're wondering: the eye's gone." Right out onto the floor. "They picked it up and showed it to me. Looked like a hardboiled egg." You laugh when you can. It's not very funny. He brings up the explosion that afternoon: "Hope that was you two." Anders admits it was, and that they took out a Heavy Raider. (Awesome! I totally guessed that's what that was! I guess there is a spaceship learning curve after all. I'm sure I'll screw up something momentarily, though.) Tigh is pleased with the graduation schematics, and Chief says they've been getting these excellent little presents for weeks now. (So what was Gaeta doing the months before that?) Merely mentioning the NCP makes Anders wanna puke, because in every scene somebody's gotta almost puke about the NCP because it's so very bad. Chief worries about taking out Baltar without a lot of collateral damage, and Tigh gets very crusty and loud and crazy. "No boundaries for them, no boundaries for us!" Gross.

Anders stares at his creepy ass and Tigh hobbles around on his cane to the wireless. Chief explains that, according to plan, they've been trying to contact a Raptor in orbit every day at the same time, but that the Cylons always jam the transmission. He says he's at least asked the source for the jamming frequencies, but then Anders goes all Tigh on their asses. "There is no Raptor. There never was. The Galactica is not coming back. They're not. Accept it." So I guess we can see how he can be all crazy in Tigh's crazy Osama world, or at least see where he's coming from, since he's already played [the Wait & See game](#) back on Regular Caprica. Tigh yells. "Watch your frackin' mouth! There's a Raptor, every day, listening. That's the plan. The old man isn't just going to leave us to the Cylons." Um, "The old man' left me to the Cylons," Anders reminds him. "If it wasn't for my wife being a

royal pain in the ass and refusing to let it go, I'd be dead a year now." Tigh gets up in his face and you think he's going to punch him, but his poor old face goes heartbroken: "Any word on Kara?" Nothing. "In four months." Anders looks down; Tigh is sad. Everything you wanted: Kara and Saul to realize how much ground they share between them, all those silly old rivalries laid down. Everything you want, in the ugliest way possible.

Kara looks at the needled corpse of Leoben in the night of her apartment, her eyes wet. I like to think that they had to do this not only because of the fantasy-fulfilled thing, or because of how it pushes every button you can have as the child of an abusive parent, but also because: if she were free, she'd take them all out. She's too powerful, so she had to be taken off the board, and both Leoben Conoy and Ronald Moore know this. She could so beat all their asses, she could save everybody, if she weren't locked up. I don't really believe that's true, I know it isn't, but it's a choice, because sometimes you have to think things that aren't true, or else it just gets too hard. A to B to C: I love her; so she doesn't belong here, blunted and stained and helpless; so clearly this is due to her being a superhero. If he didn't have her locked up, she'd fly out of there like a ninja, straight to a Viper, and take them all out and beat everybody up, and then she could take everybody home, and they'd be safe forever.

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Leoben lets himself in and she goes still. "Hi honey, I'm home!" He stalks down the stairs, smiling lightly at her in the half-light. "You kill me, I download, I come back. We start over. Five times now." The body looms. He smiles and sits down calmly across from her, speaking earnestly. "I'm trying to help you, Kara. I only want you to see the truth of your life. The reason why you suffered and you struggled for so long. That's why God sent me to you, and that's why God wants us to be together." Everything except the last dependent clause is cool, and true. Literally true. But the last one makes my tummy hurt. She searches his crazy crazy face for awhile. "You're right." He does a crazy robot version of a double take and she almost smiles at him. "You're right, and I hear you. I do. So thank you." She reaches out, leans in. "Thank you for putting up with me. I'm so sorry..." He interrupts her without looking at her face. "Put it down, Kara." She smiles, suddenly a madwoman, gleaming like a diamond. She

idly holds the knife out, toward his face. "Just put it down." She drops it, point-first; it drops into the carpet and twangs there in the floor. "I'm a patient man," he begins, and she smiles -- almost like Kara, like the one we knew before -- and interrupts: "You're not a man." The part that stays free is disobedience. They discuss how she just needs more time, that eventually she's going to hold him, and embrace him, and tell him she loves him. "I've seen it." She snaps back to reality for a second and shakes her head: "You're insane." Anything to know she's still in there; anything to know the bird's still alive and he hasn't gotten her yet. Anything to know she's still fighting. He smiles weirdly. "To know the face of God is to know madness." He picks up the knife and looks up into her face, says he's going to bed, tries for a kiss -- she jerks back -- and then invites her to come with him. He makes a creepy sniffing noise and stands up: "Either way you're spending the night with me." She's horrified and grossed out, and the body looms. "I do love you, Kara Thrace," he says. I believe him; it's horrible. I hate the Dancing Girl story so, so much. Every third Nazi, seems like, would do this: take a girl and dress her up pretty. I can't do it; it's Starbuck for Christ's sake. He takes off and she goes nuts, tearing up the stairs and out the door -- and into the cell bars that cage her fake house in. And she begins to scream: "Let me out of here! I don't belong here! Let me out!"

The Fleet -- what's left of it -- runs practice drills as Adama walks around Galactica all alone, putting things right, the placement of objects. Outside they form up, Racetrack and Galactica's CAG, Kat, on point, with the Admiral watching every move. They do spaceship things, in space, I don't know what. Something happens and everybody yells at each other and Kat aborts the maneuver. Helo, the Galactica XO, acknowledges the abort and notes she's running out of fuel. Bill says not to bring them in, but to send out the "tanker bird" so they can use this time to practice refueling in space. Helo worries: they've already run this drill sixteen times now. "Then the next one will be seventeen, won't it?" Helo nods and launches the tanker; Lee over on the Pegasus is washing his face when they announce the launch. He heads over to his phone to bitch at Adama; he is very fat, and [the Towel](#) is in attendance, looking much smaller. Everything you want, in the ugliest way possible.

Lee, dressed on the Pegasus CIC, whines about what the hell. Adama, clearly in no mood for this over the phone, yells at him that if they can't do this simple shit in training, how are they supposed to do it for real? Lee hasn't gotten an answer, because his skill is whining, not getting it done. One of the Vipers wigs out technologically in space and she interrupts their pointless awful fight, and Helo finally brings them in. Adama throws more things and is even more terrifyingly angry; on Pegasus, Dualla shakes her head. (Oh, I love Dualla again. Thanks for that.)

Lee chases Bill into his office bitching at full strength and actually making sense: "Two ships at half strength, crews that haven't seen action in a year and a half, and you're acting like the problem is that they aren't working hard enough?" Well, it kinda is. Adama is not having this: "Have you taken a look at yourself lately? You're weak. Soft. Mentally and physically." Lee protests that this isn't about him, but Dad disagrees: "You've had four months to get your act together, and so far all you've been able to do is whine about how hard it is." Two things here: first of all, have you met your son? He's dumb and cute and bitches constantly. But second of all: I am so happy to see them fighting about something that matters and not their family bullshit. Not that I had a problem with the family bullshit, but it's a funny kind of respect for the character to have him offering the valid other side, and turns their usual estranged bitching and pushmi-pullyu love-hate stuff onto solid and equal ground, and I like that. "It's going to get a lot harder. Turn around and get your fat ass out of here. Get your men ready or I'll find someone who can. Dismissed." Lee's pride is taking some hits. He stares at his dad and then leaves.

Tigh and Chief watch Sam Anders play Pyramid with Duck; both pairs are thus having secret insurgent conversations in broad daylight. Not even sports are free of war now. Chief worries, hard, that this new deterrent action they're planning is where they cross the line. Anders, on the field, tells Duck he can't back out once they start. "It's wrong, Colonel," says the Chief, but Tigh disagrees, saying they've sent soldiers on one-way missions before, and that it's the best change to take out Baltar. What the frack are they talking about? How bad does this get? Duck tells Anders no worries: "Ever since they killed Nora I got nothing to live for." Suicide bombing is so gross. This is gross. This is guns in the Temple all over again. If you forget what you're fighting for



then you are fighting for nothing and you already lost. That's like killing somebody for stealing an empty box. It makes no sense. And yet, when Tigh is talking, I totally agree with him. What that means is that I am cult-susceptible, apparently have no regard for human life, and that I am wishy-washy on matters of grave importance. Either that, or these are questions with no answers. It was easier when they were just raping Boomer and you could merrily push them out an airlock and feel good about it. Well, not easier, but you know what I mean. Questions that had answers. Now? No. Duck shoves Anders to the ground, makes his goal, and then picks him up again. I guess Anders's health is better, considering he's back to being a total bad-ass. "Look me in the eye and tell me you're committed to this," says Anders, and the camera whirls around them as he does; Anders crushes Duck in his huge arms and prays for him. "Some things you just don't do, Colonel. Not even in war," says Chief determinedly. Tigh shoves himself to his feet: "Maybe you'll feel different when it's you in detention. Duck volunteered. He's going." A crane shot pulls back; Tigh walks stiffly with his crutch through the game, which continues on around him.

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"It's a hard thing to say," says Adama, "but I don't know who my son is anymore." Or the ship, or the crew, he says. "I feel pretty much alone." That's so sad. I miss Roslin too! "Except maybe for you," he finishes quietly, looking at Sharon. They're sitting in what was once her cell, but I hope and believe now is just her quarters. She smiles softly at him. "I wish I could go back a year, and tell that Admiral Adama about this conversation." They are so easy together, the love is so obviously apparent. I guess he misses Dualla too; I missed her as well. "A year's a long time," he says, weary. "Can I ask you something very personal?" He doesn't answer her, just looks. "Do you feel guilty about leaving the people behind on New Caprica?" He looks down at the table, at their teacups. "I don't do guilt." Yes, he does. He always has, he just calls it a bunch of other things that prove what a good and strong man he is. He turns it into redemption. "You know, a year ago, when you put me in this cell... I was at a crossroads. I sat in here for weeks, just consumed with rage at all the things that had happened to me. And at some point I realized it was all just guilt. I was angry at myself for the choices I had made. Betraying my people, losing the baby... " Feeling like she'd somehow earned it;

covering her face in shame. "So I had a choice: I could either move forward, or stay in the past. But the only way to move forward was to forgive myself." She's always been my favorite character; I like to see her strong, and more powerful than her regret. They've done literally everything you can do to a person, to this woman, and she fights to stay strong, and she stays strong. "I don't think we can survive," she says -- the Fleet, Galactica, New Caprica -- "unless the man at the top finds a way to forgive himself." He looks in her eyes and (I'm sure this was a patented EJO ad lib) refills her tea sweetly. She watches his face while he's not looking.

Lee chows the hell down and bitches about his dad to Dualla. "Two pilots almost killed because they've been in the cockpit for eleven hours, and he wants to bust my balls. 'You're soft.' Can you believe that?" She looks at him but doesn't say anything. This scene is remarkable because it manages to take one of the lamest things from last season, The Love That All Of A Sudden, and makes it strong and believable. The dialogue and McClure's tone do this, just like that, in a tiny little scene about how married people actually act. I love it. "What?" he whines, pissy. "You agree, is that it?" She goes back to her work. "Forget it. I'm not looking for a fight." He stomps around and shoves food in his mouth and tells her not to do that. "If you've got something to say..." She looks at him, and there's so much love and respect and disappointment in her: "He's right. You are soft. I'm not talking about the weight. You've lost your edge, your confidence. You lost your war, Lee, and the truth is you're a soldier who needs a war. And you don't wanna hear it, because you've got it in your head that your father's the soldier, and you sure don't wanna be like him. Truth is, you are like him. More like him than you know. That's one of the reasons I married you," she says, with a smile that takes what would normally be a pretty creepy compliment, given her daddy shit with Adama, but somehow makes it okay. They're going to be all right.

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Chief flips the bowl and gets new data: the Cylon jamming freqs. Down in the bunker, he tries and tries, and Anders is totally Tigh some more about how this proves the worthlessness of their "source on the inside."

Up in space, Racetrack orbits in her Raptor and waits for word, like every day for the last four months. She's an ECO like Helo, right? So the guy Skull from last season is the Pilot? Spaceships are confusing.

Chief makes contact, and the radio goes crazy and loud.

Racetrack gets ready to leave just as Skull picks up the transmission and tells her the recognition codes match: she gets excited and tells him to send the coded response and spin up FTL so they can get back to Galactica. And here's what the message says:

WILL MAKE CONTACT THIS FREQ EVERY TWELVE HOURS PREPARE  
SITREP FOR COMMAND AUTHORITY

HAVE HOPE WE'RE COMING FOR YOU

Have hope. Everybody watching simultaneously bursts into tears; the part that stays free bursts into song; Chief reads it to them, down in the bunker. Tigh gulps, touched. Racetrack comms to Galactica and Pegasus about the Resistance, how they're waiting for command to instruct them on how to coordinate the rescue effort. Adama stares up. "It's going to be okay. It's really going to be okay."

Roslin and Tori compare the Resistance surveillance pictures of the NCP members, in their ski masks; they number 200. Roslin can't believe there would even be twenty people who would "turn against their own kind," but that's kind of always been the thing that fucked her up. Tori says it'll be really hard to figure out who they are, since the Cylons know that the non-collaborators would totally kill them. "They fucking should," Roslin spits. There's my girl.

Duck prays at Nora's altar, in his tent. "I know I haven't lived a model life. I've made a lot of mistakes. But I'm gonna need your protection today." You kind of want to think this isn't actually going to happen, but you know it is. With hope on the horizon and the rescue underway? Not on this show. He's going to blow himself up. He's already gone.

Gaeta enters Colonial One; Caprica sips her coffee and warmly

tells him good morning. He doesn't even look at her. He tells Gaius to get ready for the graduation ceremony, and Gaius stands up, all nasty and arrogant -- and having put on at least fifteen pounds, boy is buff right now -- and tells Gaeta he's not going: "Security concerns." The whole thing twists again and you realize he's been keeping Gaeta as a pet: both Gaius and Caprica at least suspect what he's been up to. They grin separately with a horrible kind of smirking victory. "Don't look so worried!" says Gaius. Games within games. "There'll be other graduations!" Gaeta stares for a second and gets it together: "Right. I'll just... let the staff know." He takes off at a clip to have the stupidest most unending sequence of both episodes.

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Chief complains to Tigh that there's no point in blowing up Duck if Galactica is coming, if the nightmare is over, but Tigh says they need to have a full uprising cooking when they come. It's beer o'clock. He says the only possible reason they would abort is if Chief's secret sources say that Gaius isn't going to be there. Except also, though, Duck has eyeballs and will know if he's there or not, and it's a lot easier to get work to Duck about the change in plans than it is to run around flipping dog bowls over. Chief runs and runs to the secret place; jangly Mediterranean rock-out and poudy drums don't actually make this part more interesting or exciting. Am I missing something? I am fully willing to admit that I am missing something. The bowl remains unflipped and Chief is sad and goes back to Mantua or whatever, and then immediately Gaeta shows up and flips the bowl, but it's too late, and complicating the lameness is how the camera travels up his body all: "CAN YOU BELIEVE IT'S GAETA?" and there's an insert shot of Gaeta putting a note in the secret place and the note says: "Baltar not at graduation!" Which will be obvious when he gets there, and I don't... whatever. I guess it makes it more tragic that he does it for no reason, except there's nothing tragic about suicide bombers no matter the circumstance: they are assholes, and they go to hell. That's no more tragic than any other kind of suicide; it's all the same kind of suicide. Duck can go fuck himself.

Oh, he's about to: Duck straps explosives all around his midsection. It's so ugly. He looks at himself in a cracked mirror and gets his SS gear together, carries his duffle bag toward a

Cylon building with Centurions everywhere. I think one of them stops to check him out but doesn't really care. Neither of them are human now. He stands in his uniform surrounded by NCP; Jammer calls out to him but he doesn't hear. They fall into formation, black jackboots in a line. Three mounts the podium. "Good morning, and welcome to all graduates. You are the hope, you're the dream of a new tomorrow, for humans and Cylon alike, and I salute you for the risks that you have taken for just showing up today."

Tigh listens, or maybe just stares: "Today you begin a new career and a new life as provisional police officers."

Chief and Cally in bed with their son: "Looking out across this room, I see the significance of this new path is not lost on you. Congratulations."

Three works her way down the line, shaking hands and putting a kind or meaningful hand on each shoulder: "Good to have you with us. Congratulations." Doral follows behind, handing them their medals.

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Anders nails a Pyramid goal, out in the town.

"See you soon, Nora," says Duck, with Three standing before him. Without ever finding out who really caused her death; who among the Resistance was willing to let her die in order to take their cause higher. Click. The graduation hall goes up in flames, horrible, things flying, the whole world exploding. Duck exploding and taking out nobody that matters: nobody that won't resurrect, nobody that wasn't already dead. Futile and without any gift of morale or hope, or a soul. Just the fact that war sucks and turns you into something horrible, and there's nobody strong enough to make it work any other way. Paper floats through the silence; the air is bright and dark. There are 200 bodies on the floor.

# THE DICTATES OF CONSCIENCE

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 2 | Aired on 10.05.2006

*Precipice* - As the suicide bombings continue, the Cylons step up their campaign of attrition. Kara learns she has a daughter. Lee and the *Pegasus* are sent on a new mission, and Sharon becomes an officer of the Fleet. Roslin and Zarek are apparently executed.

**Recaplet:** Duck's bomb only killed 36 people out of the 200, and also Gaius wasn't there, which was the whole point, and also Jammer was about ten inches behind him, but didn't die. In the wake of the Duck bomb -- and others -- the Cylons decide to round up a bunch of people for no reason, using the SS. Which means that Jammer, in a balaclava, kidnaps his old friend Cally in the middle of the night, leaving her kid screaming and unattended. Later on, feeling bad, he asks Boomer to check on Cally in the detention center. Cally isâ€¦ungrateful for the attention, to say the least. Speaking of, Chief goes apeshit on Gaeta about Cally, because he still hasn't figured out that Gaeta's their contact in the administration. Roslin and Gaius have a horribly tense moment about the ethics of suicide bombing. Ellen learns that the Cylons were going to release Tigh anyway, because they know he's the head of the Resistance, so the total whoring of herself to Cavil that she's been doing has been for no reason really whatsoever; he tells her to hand over their next rendezvous or else they'll just pick Tigh up for detention again, and torture him even worse. So she does, because she loves her husband, and because she is a retard. Just so happens that the next rendezvous is with a detachment from Galactica herself, which is double scary; the contingent is led by Sharon Agathon, whom Adama commissions as an officer! â€¦Just after he tells Lee to take the Pegasus and the civilian Fleet back to looking for Earth, leaving just our girl up there in the sky. Meanwhile, Leoben steps up Kara's creepy Prisoner-style torture just a bit more by presenting her with -- apparently -- their child, a little blonde girl named Casey. Kara's disinterest in the kid is thrown off after the girl is injured in a scene no less brutal than the previous episode's dinner murder scene. Kara seems to give in a little bit to Leoben's construct over the child's hospital bed, but who can say? She is completely nuts right now. Gaius, while in a Six Fugue, signs an executive order condemning like 200 detainees to execution. This group includes Cally, Roslin, and Zarek; Jammer cuts Cally loose



-- friggin' of course -- and the episode ends with her running through the New Caprica landscape and the sound of a grip of Centurions opening fire on the detainees. I was weirdly worried about Cally and happy that she did not get shot in the head, which is especially weird if you take into account how rude she was to Boomer. Like, just because she shot Adama and is now a member of the fascist ruling class, you have to be rude? Whatever. If Roslin dies, Adama is going to kill all their asses with a karate chop. And then I will beat up whoever is left.

**Recap:** Laura sits in a Cylon cell, feet bare, shivering. I guess the whole suicide-bombing thing wasn't taken lightly. Gaius peers at her through the cell door and enters; the light coming down is bright and she shields her eyes. He carries in one chair and a New Caprica SS guy, in his mask, brings in another one. Laura drags her chair closer, with a foot, and sits. Gaius hands her her glasses and she puts them on, regarding him cordially. He tells her he can help her -- I think he says, "In ways I can't help myself" -- and that he can protect her. "But you have to understand the situation has changed. The insurgency has crossed the line. Suicide bombings?" She looks away. "It's abhorrent. Contrary to everything we believe in." She shrugs at the pronoun. "So you and I, we will publicly condemn these tactics. They cannot be legitimized in any way." She smiles at him; McDonnell's touch is as deft and heart-wrenching as ever. "There's something that scares the Cylons after all," she says quietly, holding her ground. But he's got her: "I should think using men and women as human bombs should scare us all." He's right but she can't say that. "Desperate people take desperate measures," she says, faltering, and he raises his voice, begging her to look him in the eye and say she approves of "sending young men and women into crowded places with explosives strapped to their chests." She can't do it. She looks down, then at him, shakes her head with a tiny sad smile.

"Thirty-three people killed," he says, "and their only crime was putting on a police uniform. Trying to bring some order to the chaos out there..." And she's off! "Order? By arresting innocent people in the dead of night? Detaining them without charge? Torturing them for information?" And he lies, repeats the lie, because he has to believe the lie: "Nobody has been tortured." I'm glad this show knows well enough to leave the current

political situation alone! It would be so crazy if they were talking about Iraq! He stalks toward the door and she sneers: "Tell that to Colonel Tigh." He repeats the lie, and stares at her, and loses his cool. "We're done here." He knocks on the door and the SS guy opens it. "I hope you understand the severity of the situation, and ask you to obey the dictates of your conscience." She looks at him. "... Which is what I've always done." It's sad. Gaius is sad. He believes this, still. He's never fucked up so terribly bad that he couldn't lie to himself after the fact and assure himself he was doing the right thing. He's never had to look at it and say that he didn't obey the dictates of his conscience. No matter how bad it got, or the consequences. "Of that I have no doubt," she says, with great disgust. They stare at each other more hatefully than ever before. "Please give this lovely lady her shoes back. And get her out of here."

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Night time, all along the watchtower, Centurions everywhere. [Jammer](#) steps into the foreground, looking dangerous and scared. A Centurion looks at him and lets him go. There are nervous whispers as the SS comes together for the raid. Obeying the dictates of their consciences. A very Earth-like military truck pulls up, and Cavil gets out in his crazy Night Of The Hunter garb with the creepy flat-brimmed hat. "Everything clear?" he asks Jammer, tells him not to worry. "We have your back." Jammer looks from him to the "we": scores of Centurions everywhere in lines.

Anders and the Chief discuss the latest retaliation: the Cylons have cut food rations. They have two minutes to wait until the next transmission from the Galactica Raptor; the Cylons have suggested they might shut down the marketplace, as a security risk. Tigh shrugs and says they'll come up with a new plan, freaking out Chief. That's the most innocent combat zone you can think of, it's horrible. "We need to figure out whose side we're on." Tigh gives... a very lovely speech. "Which side are we on? We're on the side of the demons, Chief. We're evil men in the gardens of paradise, sent by the forces of death, to spread devastation and destruction wherever we go. I'm surprised you didn't know that." (He doesn't watch [Doctor Who](#), I guess.) Anders and the Chief both get gut-sick OMG faces and the Raptor establishes contact. Tigh lights a cigarette and hobbles around madly, telling him to send their sitrep twice. "1150 armed

effectives," it says. Against an army that cannot die.

Jammer looks at the detainee list for tonight's raid and wigs on Cavil. "I know some of these people!" Cavil is unsurprised. "They're all insurgents, Jammer. We have to break the cycle of violence." Oh, well then. Because it's such a great thing they're doing, everybody puts on black balaclavas; Cavil tells them they won't have to wear the masks much longer. "Eventually the people will see you as heroes." Jammer sighs: "Not tonight." Things shift to night vision, green and black. Jammer directs the squads out into the city and we see people being taken, disappeared, in the dead of night. A man, a woman. Cally. A man knocks down Baby Nick's mobile as he screams and his mother struggles. They load Cally into a truck and she stares out, scared stupid.

Later, all alone in the Tyrol tent, the baby cries. Chief enters, sees the signs of struggle, lights on the empty bed, and picks up his son. "Momma's coming back. It's okay. It's okay."

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Big meeting of the Fleet leadership. Helo reads about the 1150 members of the Resistance -- "That's way less than there should be" -- and Dualla's like, "Probably because they're all dying in horrible ways?" Admiral Adama notes also that the Cylons took all the launch keys from the ships they left on the ground, and nobody knows where they are. Kat suggests they manufacture new launch keys and bring them along, but Lee says it'll take forever and it's too hard. Bill agrees, saying the best option is to let Saul and the guys on the ground find the keys themselves. Dualla asks if the Cylons might have permanently destroyed them, but Kat and Helo know those ships are too valuable. She suggests that they make a weapons drop to the insurgents, to help them get the keys and get mobile, but Lee -- who's very Tigh-like right now, due to the fact that he doesn't care what happens to New Caprica -- says the Cylons would notice the firepower, and then they'd know about the Raptor, and then "your plan" is fracked. Everybody looks at him like, You are so Tigh right now. All their faces are saying, he's been like this for four months; Kat says, "Funny, I thought this was our plan." Shut up, Kat, except not exactly, because she's cool now, and Lee sucks twice as much as ever. Bill keeps the tense meeting

moving right along.

The SS walk the streets; Chief and Gaeta discuss Cally in that insouciant leaning-against-things way that secret agents have. Gaeta tells Chief that he knows neither why or how long she'll be taken. Chief bitches at him at length; they call each other by first names. Gaeta is apologetic about everything but Chief's freaking out; he calls Gaeta a collaborator and makes to run off in a snit. Gaeta promises to try and find things out, and because Chief I guess still doesn't know he's the administration mole, acts like Gaeta's useless. He might know and just be acting like this because he's freaked, but they made such a big deal last episode about how the mole must stay secret. But it's pretty obvious that Gaius and Caprica know that he's double-dealing, so I don't know why that would still need to be true. Chief's just out of his mind and there's no talking to him about anything, so whatever, maybe Cally's rubbing off on him, but I don't want to go into that. Don't poke the bear.

Jammer walks the streets, goes to the Tyrol tent in slo-mo and sees the broken mobile. He crouches and begins to cry, freaking out; Chief appears and gives him one second of comfort before twitching off again, but Jammer brings up Cally, having heard that she was on the list last night. Chief bitches about the NCP and how they're traitors, and Jammer tries to explain that whole thing, how probably those guys are in over their heads, especially now that Duck's bomb has gotten the Cylons all hardcore. "Maybe they thought they were doing something good, get the Cylons off the streets and police our own... ?" Chief snarls and asks if Jammer knows any of them; he says he doesn't. Chief's very pissy about how useless Gaeta's being, and Jammer protests that Gaeta will help as much as he can. Chief gets in his face: "He's a fracking collaborator! You know, one day when this is all over, guys like Gaeta are going to get strung up. And guys like you and me are gonna be there tying the knots. Making them tight." He runs off, and I kind of don't like Chief anymore, shockingly. He was crazy two years ago and he's just getting more wear and tear all the time. Jammer cries outside the Tyrol tent, utterly fracked on both sides.

Dinner with Kara. A treat as always. Leoben smiles, that luminous

creepy smile he has: "It's been a couple of ugly days. I know you don't care about that," I guess because she's caged off from the outside world and doesn't know anything, "but life means something to us." Or is he saying she's down with suicide bombing? She might be. "So I've decided to show you just how precious life can be. Even in the worst of times it can restore your faith." He stands and heads up the stairs, asking if she remembers the [horrible rape farm on Caprica](#); she says she remembers mainly blowing the frack out of it. I love this girl. He says it wasn't a total loss: they salvaged a bunch of samples and things. The shoe finally drops: "Like your ovary." He opens a door upstairs, and Kara starts to wig. In a second, he reappears on the stairs, with a little blonde girl. She's already done the math, did it before he opened the door, but she asks anyway: "What's that?" He carries the girl down the steps in slo-mo. "Casey, this is Kara. Your mother." The little girl smiles shyly. "Hi." Starbuck goes even more crazy.

Dee storms into Lee's area and tells him about the Admiral's plan to "put some boots on the ground" and send a liaison officer to coordinate the rescue op. The problem? "Who he's sending." Dualla hands him the brief and Lee wigs, immediately heading to Galactica.

"You can't do this! She's a Cylon!" Bill is mild: "I trust her." Lee calls this a mistake, and Bill does the usual rhetorical Bill thing: "My mistake." Except this time it's not actually true: "You're gambling with the lives of everyone on this ship, and my ship..." Bill says in no uncertain terms that he's not interested in a lecture -- from Lee in particular, I think -- about the responsibilities of command. He dismisses Lee and leaves, but his son follows him into the Galactica corridor. "This is risking the lives of the human race, not just your command," he protests. Bill says he's saving the human race, and Lee protests that he's not seeing the real deal here: "The human race is the 2000 people in the Fleet, huddled in those civilian ships. They're the safe bet." He wants to safeguard them, just like last time, when the show started and they left survivors all over the place in their haste. Bill changes the subject to how Sharon's a great person for this op because the Centurions can't tell her apart from the other models. He laughs at the irony: the Cylons did this because they didn't want the machines to become self-aware and rebel against them. "Dad," he shouts, jumping in front of him. Bill nods and

admits that he knows what Lee is saying, but there's a responsibility to the people they left behind. Lee quotes Roslin: "Our first responsibility is the survival of humanity. We can't lose sight of that. Over the last year we've lost sight of almost everything. We got soft," he says, throwing his father's words back at him. "But if we go back to New Caprica now, and we lose? It's over. Humanity just stops. Admiral's stars don't give you the right to make that gamble." This show is hard because whoever's talking, that's who I agree with. I haven't felt like that since I was seven years old. Bill nods. "You're right, son. Make plans to resume the search for earth with the Pegasus and the Civilian Fleet." So the Galactica will stay behind? "I know why we left those people behind, and I know that it was their choice in the first place to be down there, and I realize the survival of the human race outweighs anything else, but this time I can't live with it. Can't face it. Maybe I'm a coward but I'm going back." Lee promises his father he won't stand a chance; meaning, of course, that his bad-assery is going to blow everybody's mind. "I'm going back, son." They embrace; a shaft of light shines down on them. Thank goodness they're okay.

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Casey plays on the floor of Kara's apartment. Leoben is exceedingly creepy: "Once I fertilized your egg, we transferred it to a human woman, who carried it to term. She was pretty funny. Great smile. You would have liked her." That is... the most fucked up thing anybody has ever said on this show. Gross me out to the infinite power. "Although her mother died during childbirth, Casey's heart never failed. I think she gets that will to live from you...I've seen her path. It's difficult but rewarding. She'll know the mind of God in this lifetime; she'll see patterns that others do not see. She probably gets that spiritual clarity from me," he says, smiling up at Kara like a lunatic. She's sitting on the stairs, behind the chain link of the banister; looking through bars. "She'll be hungry soon," he says. "There's food on the table." He gets up to leave; Kara doesn't move. Her mother was a monster, a drunk and abusive in ways we don't want to know about. She has refused motherhood, even stable love, on the off chance that she'll have a daughter, and hurt that daughter. And Leoben knows this. "You wouldn't let your own child starve, would you?" She stares him down. "It's not my child. I don't even know if it's human." He nods: "Half human." He assures her that somewhere,



Kara does know that Casey's her daughter, and just can't admit it. He takes off, and she begs him to "take this" with him. "Hey! Don't leave me alone with this!" The baby stares up at her sweetly. Her face is full of rage and disgust and fear: "I don't know who or what you are, but I do know this: I'm not your mother."

Laura lectures Tigh on the subject of: Suicide Bombers Are Obscene, No Matter How Effective They Are. He asks her if she's working for the Cylons now, sarcastically, and she slaps him across the face. Everybody's quiet. Anders watches her. "Sorry," she says. "There was no excuse for that." Tigh just laughs at her like the crazy old coot he's turned into. "See, little things like that? They don't matter anymore." Nothing matters anymore: "I got one job here, lady: to disrupt the Cylons. Make them worry about the anthill they kicked down here, so they're distracted and out of position when the old man comes down out of orbit." He laughs about how deeply the bombings have engaged the Cylons' attention, and says he won't give that edge up. "We are talking about people blowing themselves up," she repeats, like he missed that part, and he muses about how half the time she's got air-lockin' ice water in her veins, and other times she comes off as "just a naïve little schoolteacher." He repeats his thing about how he's been sending people on suicide missions in two wars now, and it doesn't make a difference if they're "in a Viper or walking onto a parade ground": in the end they're just as dead. One thing that torture has done for Tigh. Well, two things actually. The first is that I really, really like him now. Actually ever since "[Scar](#)." And the second thing is that he talks like a motherfucking genius now. I love it when he opens his mouth. Remember when he was like, "What the hell?" and then he'd take a drink and then Starbuck would call him a shit-eater, and he'd go "What the hell?" and take a drink? Now it's like he writes a fucking symphony every single scene. It's awesome: "So take your piety and moralizing and high-minded principles, and stick 'em someplace safe, until you're back in your cushy chair on Colonial One again. I've got a war to fight." Maybe his suckiness was located in his eye -- like with that rapper Houston that fought his eyeball for the forces of good -- and that's why he's become terrifying and beautiful all of a sudden. Good show, you crazy old bastard!

At the first building the Cylons ever built on New Caprica, Boomer and Caprica discuss how fucked up everything is, basically, and how detaining people in the middle of the night does not lead to warm feelings and cozy robot/people hugging sprees. On the other hand, Caprica notes, suicide bombs. Valid. Jammer approaches Boomer -- remember they were friends on the Deck Crew when she was secretly boning his boss a million years ago -- and stammers and acts weird because nobody knows the etiquette of resurrection, or if you can be friends with people who stick you in concentration camps, even if you join their fucked-up paramilitary police, on and on like this, and he can't say the word "friends," so he keeps hopping around it, and the only thing more painful than this is the sadness in her eyes and the need to ignore all that: "Yeah, Jammer. Just spit it out." So he does, and she goes very quiet: "They got Cally on the last raid." How come everybody acts like this is such an awful thing? Seriously. That is the very definition of "not my fucking problem."

Kara paces and plays with her pretty pretty hair and spirals out into crazier and crazier territory, thinks about rage and moms and [Cain](#). Lee. The kid giggles and flops around cutely on the couch, chases Kara around the dining table, talks to her in crazy kid language. Kara picks her up, giggling, and puts her back on the couch for what must be the twentieth time. "Frack!" she screams, and hides in the bathroom, back against the door, listening to her mind shatter and fall apart and there's a scream in the back of her head and finally she drags herself to the mirror and stares into it and tries to pull it together. There's a tiny little scream, and a tiny little thump. She heads out into the room: Casey's not on the couch. But at the foot of the stairs, there's a pair of little feet, and Casey's not moving, and next to her head on the cement there's a pool of blood, and it's growing.

Do you have kids? Because that's actually the most horrific thing I've ever seen on the show. Surely there's some kind of Hays Code thing about no little kids dying on TV. That was like all of that movie IT crammed into three seconds. You know how they say like "my flesh crawled"? It's like every hair on your body goes the wrong way of its own accord simultaneously, and your skin slips around on your bones and muscles, and your skin and everything go cold, like your body is trying to get away before your brain even realizes what it just saw. And then there's Kara, looking at this, feeling her mom knock her across the room and

seeing how tiny Casey is, and that's how they get you.

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Casey lies in a hospital bed with a bandaged head. Leoben brings Kara a cup of coffee as she stares down; she takes it after a moment and looks up at his face. A Raider flies over. He sits and watches her intently as she sips. Fucking anything but little kids. I cannot do that shit. I would rather watch "[Pegasus](#)" a hundred times than that shit. Auugh. I'm shivering just thinking about that.

Boomer enters Cally's cell; she doesn't look up. "Hi, Cally," she says, and identifies herself in the particular: "It's me. Boomer." Not Number Eight, but the particular Boomer that dated the love of your life, that you shot with an ugly face. Cally won't look up; when she does, the face is back. "I wish I had a gun." I'd turn around and leave even if I didn't fucking hate Cally. Rude. Boomer sighs. "Are you all right? Physically, I mean?" Cally snarls at her. "What do you want from me?" Boomer looks around herself, finally crouches at Cally's side, trying to connect. "Look. A lot's happened in everyone's life, but I want you to know... I want you and Galen to know that I'm happy for you? Especially since you started a family," she smiles. "Something him and I talked about once before," she says sadly. Dumb, Boomer! Why the fuck do you think she shot you in the first place? Cally jumps up at her, like a beast; Boomer jumps back: "Can you get me out of here?" She's not sure, because of the separation of ministries... "Then frack you, Sharon. You stupid fracked-up toaster. How many times do I have to shoot you, anyway? If you can't help me, then just go away and leave us alone." "Us," is it? Boomer stares down. Question: How come Cally's the only one that gets to act like this? How come Dualla's turned from some girl into a pretty cool chick, but Cally's as nasty and classless as she was to start with? I promised myself and Aaron Douglas I wasn't going to hate her anymore, but I can't find my way around this one. I don't know what else to say. I just fucking hate her. ... No, I just figured it out: this scene is about everything I hate about her, so it makes me crazy. It's not that she's acting poorly or out of character, it's just all the things I can't get past with her, in one short scene.

This is a woman who is so sold on her own status as a victim that any time she reacts to anything, it's both A) nasty and B) self-congratulatory. She's so meek and mild and whatever, so when

she does speak up it's with vulgarity and violence, but none of that would be necessary if she had any sense of self at all in the first place. She acts out of weakness and entitlement: "What can you do for me? Then fuck you." This is the kind of woman who marries her abuser, which... is what she did, so never mind. I get it. Totally my shit, and I get that now, and I apologize. But I mean, lay her down alongside Boomer: two women who loved the same man. And one of them kept her mouth shut about it and felt yearning feelings of victimhood and love, and the other one went through an identity crisis the likes of which nobody's ever seen before, and tried desperately to hold herself together for his sake. How can Cally ever think she wins that fight? If she can't even believe in herself enough to get over this jealousy shit when she landed the guy, had his baby, and her rival is a member of the Nazi party, when does she actually calm down? Never, and I don't even care anymore. I know she's not going anywhere, and I want Chief to be happy, so me and Cally will have a truce, and meanwhile I'll be over here with Boomer and all the other people who aren't selfish and pointless and mean -- who actually try, and change, and grow.

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Some kind of pineapple-haired insurgent that looks like the witch girl from Runaways crossed with the gothic homeless of 1996 Seattle sneaks a bomb into a building in a bulky jacket. Could not look more suspicious. A member of the SS grabs her and she shoots him, then heads into the center of the building and blows herself up.

Doral shows the Cylons the video: "Twenty-three Cylons critically wounded." Fourteen had to be boxed. Boomer stupidly brings up the human casualties (four dead) and Doral keeps talking: "The power substation was crippled." Half the city's without power, and the best estimate puts recovery at two weeks.

Congratulations, Suicide Girl: you just managed to make living in a concentration camp less awesome. Three asks Caprica if she still thinks they're being too hard on them; Caprica is unresponsive. Cavil calls it "a very serious, straightforward problem: increase control, or lose control." He calls for stronger measures, and Three agrees on behalf of the Threes. Simons -- hi Simon! -- agree, and Dorals agree, and ask if Sixes agree. They do. A Six looks over at Caprica: "Most of us do, anyway." Agree

with what? Something even more horrible yet!

Three tosses a document down on Gaius's desk. "What is this?" It's just an order for the summary executions of all the detainees listed on the next page, requiring his signature. He looks at them obnoxiously: "My signature?" Doral's like, "Totally! You're the President!" Caprica is worried; Three is awesome: "Read it later sign now," she sighs, all in a line like that. He looks up and seems ready to balk, so Caprica gets in the middle of it. "Just because you've decided to do this doesn't mean you have to drag him into sin with you!" Threes laugh at her: "Don't you lecture me about sin," they say. "I'm not the one who committed the first act of Cylon-on-Cylon violence in our history." Gaius asks about that, and Three explains: "[She crushed my head in with a rock](#), back on Caprica. Interesting she didn't tell you..." Caprica loses a bit of her smooth and yells that she had to do it, but it's not like she was proud of her actions. Cavil sighs that this is all very interesting, but go ahead and sign the thing. Gaius protests that they don't need his signature, and Three smiles deliciously. "Actually, we do: we are here as allies and friends of the legitimate New Caprica government, so everything we do requires your signature." (This would be so crazy if they were talking about Iraq!) "In other words," Cavil explains -- and it's a good explanation for something that's always confused me, complete with air-quotes -- "they're worried what 'God' might think if they commit murder: they're covering their existential asses." That is... so scary. True and scary, how much sense that makes.

Gaius stands his ground, and everybody gets irritated. "You're going to have to salve your consciences some other way," he blusters, and one Doral explains they can always find another President, while another cocks a gun to his head. Caprica shouts, "Stop this!" And everybody stares at everybody else for awhile. "This is crazy!" Doral shoots her in the head and she falls onto the floor. I guess that's a genie out of the bottle now. The other Sixes are clearly thrown by her death; Boomer stares down, horrified and disgusted. Gaius murmurs a prayer to the singular God, and Cavil's like, "Duh, she'll be back. ... But you won't if you don't sign that thing, unless you're a Cylon, which is still doubtful." Doral screams at him, gun to his head, to sign it. Over and over and over.

Six Fugue! Chip Six sits on his desk in a very clean and happy office. "There's nothing you can do, Gaius. It'll be okay." He's like happy to see her; I don't know if it's because he thinks she's Caprica Six or because she is Caprica Six or if he's just happy to see Chip Six or what. All the above. "Help me." She explains, back in her usual role of pointing out to him the things he can't actually admit for himself, that he has to sign it, or else they are going to kill him. Not some other time but right this second. "I can't. I won't! You can't force..." She leans in sweetly.

"Sometimes you have to do things you hate, so you can survive to fight another day." He looks down at the page, back in his office. But he's already signed it. The Cylons all stare down at him. Three takes it brightly and leaves; he begins to cry. Boomer's eyes are full and she swallows deeply as she looks at him and waits for Caprica to come back.

"I, Sharon Agathon, do now pledge my faith and my loyalty to the protection of the Twelve Colonies of Kobol, and will carry out the lawful orders of my superiors as an officer in the Colonial Fleet."

WHAT? That's AWESOME! Adama congratulates Sharon on her commission. He is so far ahead of the curve with this shit: the Cylons have been trying everything they can to swallow humanity whole since before the Armistice; it's about time he started biting back. Become the enemy, make them into your image, until nobody knows the difference anymore.

Sharon and Helo stand alone, holding each other, in their matching uniforms. She's still kind of agog. "You know what this means to me?" Helo tells her how one of the first things you learn in the Academy is that symbols matter: uniforms, flags, banners, even mascots. "They're like pieces of your heart you can look at." He looks her in the eye and tells her the uniform means a lot to him. "I know it does, Helo. It means a lot to me too. I won't betray it." Aww.

They kiss, but you have to fill in the blanks, which goes something like, "... Until I find out they [stole our baby and told us it was dead -- moments after I narrowly missed a forced abortion -- and the deposed president has been living off our baby's blood ever since like some fracked-up vampire](#). Because at that point I



will kill each and every one of you bitches." And she'll be right, too, and I will cheer her on.

As the crew clears her Raptor for flight, she asks permission to ask Adama another intense question: "How do you really know that you can trust me?" He looks at her evenly: "I don't. That's what trust is. Good hunting, Lieutenant." She salutes' Bill and Helo salute back, the two men that love her best in the world. I am so, so scared about this baby thing now! I can't stop thinking about it!

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Cavil touches Ellen's leg on their gross couch where they do it, and he says that last time was really something, and she smiles sexily. "Thought you might like that." He notes that she "didn't do the twist this time," and she shakes her head: "No, this was the swirl." Things I Don't Need In My Head, take one billion. Well, Cavil wanted something "memorable," she giggles, and out of nowhere he asks after Saul. She freezes. "Fine?" And when, pray tell, is his next meeting with the insurgents? Ellen's freaked and doesn't reply. "... Why do you think she left him out of detention." She gets her shit together and becomes awesome again, grinning and shimmying at him: "I thought it was because of the twist." That too, he admits, but "having him out there gives us advantages..." She tells him straight up she doesn't know anything about anything, and he asks if they can't just consider her denials as read and move on: "I want a specific place and time for a high-level meeting of the leadership. Or we'll pick up Saul again, and this time he'll lose more than an eye." Ellen realizes how fucked she actually is.

Chief tells Tigh about the rendezvous, and finally has to tell Tigh the liaison officer is Sharon. "I hope that's your idea of a joke?" asks Tigh, crusty overclocking, and Chief shakes his head: Adama totally commissioned her. "She's a serving officer, which is... more than you can say about us." They discuss the best places for the rendezvous; Anders has a canyon on a map already picked out for the Raptor to land. There's a knock at the door, and they hide all their super-secret spy stuff, but it's just Ellen with some crackers and treachery. Anders points at the map, saying he's going to meet the Galactica party halfway from the canyon to the city; they wrap up the meeting and memorize all

their stuff, and Tigh leans over to throw away all the evidence. Ellen takes them -- "Don't get up" -- and stands at the fire, slipping the notes into her pocket. I really, really feel for Ellen, dude. This is not going to go awesome. I do have one question: why was she screwing Cavil just now? I can think of a million different reasons, and it seemed like it was the end of their arrangement, but I don't know. She's a mystery.

Gaeta runs into Colonial One, screaming for Gaius, missing him where he sits near the fore door of the office. "Tell me you didn't sign this!" he screams, and Gaius begs him to leave him alone. This is the only time he didn't obey the dictates of his conscience: the only time he can't fool himself into thinking he did the right thing. This, of all things, is his fall. That fascinates me. Even Gaius has a line; he just had to cross it before he knew that. Gaeta screams at him some more and he tries to explain how he didn't have a choice, but he's not trying very hard, because now he knows what we've always known: he's a weak little pansy that always takes the easy way out. I feel terrible for him! This is weird! "There are over 200 names on this list," Gaeta screams, ordering him again and again to look at the names on the list. You already know all the names on the list, which makes it worse, because you're like, "No way." Gaius is hollow and looking even more destroyed than ever: "I've seen them," he cries. Screams. "There was nothing I could do!"

The NCP descends on town en masse for the last raid. Everybody screams and runs about all crazy. Two of them appear at the schoolhouse, and by the set of her jaw you know Laura knows what comes next, even if you can't believe it yourself.

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Boomer bitches at Three that killing Tyrol's wife is going to turn him, and his labor union -- which is a good point, it's an organized faction -- against the Cylon, but Three scoffs. "In your view, there's no reason to kill anyone, right?" But see, they made this decision already. All of them together. "Just like when we decided to listen to you and Caprica when we came here, to start this new and glorious chapter in Cylon/human relations." Boomer points out that none of this democratic robot voting prattle has anything to do with killing Cally. (Meanwhile, I just took a vote among all the Jacob models, and we said, "Don't care, but if you hurt one

hair on Roslin's gorgeous head... ") Three ignores her: "Nobody likes mortal death, Boomer, but... she tried to murder you. Maybe it's God's justice?" "Tried to," my entire ass; you don't get the points for that failure; you don't get to not be a murderer just because your murder was poorly executed. Boomer looks back at Cally, in a truck, making more horrible faces.

Zarek climbs into a truck next to Roslin for what turns out to be the sweetest, funniest, scariest couple of relationship scenes in the whole thing. "Need a lift, Mr. Vice President?" She's sitting in the cargo area of a military truck with her hands tied. "Haven't seen much of you lately," she says vaguely, and he tells her he's been in detention for four months. He refused to collaborate with the Cylon partnership, and Baltar "got a little pissed." He's proud, and rightly so. She shows him her cuffs: "He's a little pissed at me too." Zarek laughs. They're about to die and they know it. I've never liked Zarek as much as I do in this episode.

Boomer drops the Raptor in the valley and steps out with a contingent of Marines; Anders's party makes their way toward her, along the river. He waits with his group behind a big tree and soon enough, she calls out from across the shallow ford: "Go Panthers!" Adama's favorite team, and the rivals of the Buccaneers, Anders's team. "C-Bucks rule!" he shouts. She comes out from the green, trudges across the river, and Anders comes to meet her. She throws her arms around him and they are very still: "Sam. Been a long time." He looks at her apologetically -- "I see you every day" -- and her smile falls a bit. They nod together, sad, and he takes her back to his party.

The trucks head out of New Caprica City; Gaeta runs from truck to truck looking for Cally.

"Lords," Kara prays, "please don't take her life. It was my mistake, don't punish her for it." Leoben puts his hand on her shoulder and comforts her: "It was an accident, Kara." Which somehow makes me sure it wasn't. Casey opens her eyes and Kara gasps: "Casey, Casey. Oh my Gods, honey." She smiles down at her and caresses her face, puts her hand in Leoben's without looking, her other hand on her daughter's arm. Casey seems to look at us between them; maybe I only want to see her as somehow sinister because I want all three of them to be playing a game. Even Leoben's taken aback by Kara's sudden

turn. I hope she's fooling.

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The jeeps full of detainees head out into a canyon, and Cavil orders Jammer to "let them stretch their legs." So...they're dead, I guess. He calls for a five-minute rest break and everyone unloads from the truck. Cavil watches, Cally snivels. "Tell me something, Laura," says Zarek. "Last year you tried to steal the election, didn't you." She smiles up at him: "Yes, I did... Tom." He laughs. "Wish you'd gone through with it." She nods. "Me too." Me too!

Boomer hears something, at the rendezvous, and then there's strafing fire everywhere; a Marine goes down as the meeting party retreats.

Jammer grabs Cally and hauls her away, still wearing his mask. He pulls out a knife and cuts her zip cuffs. "Run. Run, don't look back. Go." He pushes her down the bluff; she gets to her feet and starts running. Jammer watches. The NCP see the Centurions coming, and run off like little bitches. Cavil steps away, and Zarek pulls Laura back as their hands flip inside out, becoming guns. And Cally runs. And as the Centurions open fire, she drops to the ground.

## NATURE GIRL

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 3 | Aired on 10.12.2006

*Exodus, Part 1* - Sharon faces off with Three and somebody loses some kneecaps. Cally faces off with time and space and comes off victorious. Tigh faces off with his wife's bizarre ideas about fidelity, case pending. *Pegasus* takes off into the sky, and *Galactica* heads for the big rescue op.

**Recaplet:** Fake-out! The gunfire meant to execute the random innocents and insurgents was actually Chief's toaster-smashing backup; meanwhile, the Sharon/Anders meet-up involved some backup plans of her own. The survival of Cally, Roslin and Zarek, plus the whole HAVE HOPE thing we forgot to tell everybody last week, gives the denizens of New Caprica a bit of a future. For now. Gaius continues to bitch and moan and have weird marital moments with Chip Six, which are somewhat marred by the meaner Cylons' new theory where they blow everybody to kingdom come and let one god or the other sort 'em all out in a

nuclear fashion, Tigh continues to rock the hell out and have weird marital moments with Ellen marred only by how everybody totally knows she sold out the entire Resistance; somehow she manages to live through at least this episode but things do not look awesome in her future. Speaking of soothsaying, Honey Bunny shows up as a chamalla-freak to make Laura look like a teetotaler, talking a big game about how both the Cylon God and the real Gods totally talk to her and tell her things. Things? Oh, like how Three's dreams about Hera are totally going to come true, and how she's going to love the Cybrid but also it will make her even more nuts than she's ever been before.

Speaking of nuts, though, Kara Thrace manages to take in every little detail about her horrible fake life except for how her child is whatever's worse than a Cylon, or else a totally awesome baby, and generally doesn't do anything we haven't seen her do this season, considering that amounts to losing it, losing it a bit more, and then seriously losing it. Lee and Bill say goodbye but they're totally going to see each other in a second; this doesn't change the fact that we finally get another trademark Adama Speech that makes you wanna do some unspecified but very inspired things of some sort that mean belief and the survival of mankind. Sharon -- loving Bill still -- goes undercover among the Cylons to get those gosh-darn launch keys, so the rescuees can do more than sit around staring at the eight-person Raptor she brought and then back at the scores of thousands of them and wonder if Cally was right after all. In prep for the Big Damn Rescue, Roslin goes into overload protecting Hera, which of course insured something HORRIBLE is going to happen with the baby, and you know it'll involve Three, Sharon, Roslin, Maya, and probably Boomer into the mix, and nobody will be happy.

**Recap:** Previously on Battlestar Galactica, Tigh could not figure out why they suddenly let him out of detention! But we knew it was because Cavil was screwing him and Ellen both. Doral, Three, and Roslin all agreed that Sharon's Cybrid baby Hera needed to be protected, but they all had different ideas about how this should happen. Roslin won, because she's Roslin, and they sent the baby off with pretty old Maya. The only people who knew about the switcheroo, as far as we knew, were Roslin, Tory, and Doc Cottle. Chief and Helo and Sharon didn't know, and Adama... face it, he probably knew. Anyway, there was a dead regular

baby, and a secret Cybrid baby. And now there's Kacey, who was nearly both and is still mixed up and nobody knows for sure! Not even God(s), who have yet to weigh in on the Kacey issue one way or the other -- well, maybe they saved her last week -- yet simply cannot shut up about Hera. But then, that's been going on since the first season, hasn't it? Anyway, immediately previous to right now, Cally (and Zarek and Roslin) and Anders (and Sharon) were lined up and executed. Sort of.

ONE HOUR EARLIER THAN ALL THAT, though, Tigh is in his tent trying to replace his eye bandage. (Sigh. I thought we talked about that EIGHT MONTHS EARLIER THAN TODAY. And on top of everything else, Tahmoh Penniket hates me! So we got two in the loss column for the week, and it's... Tuesday.) Ellen helps Tigh sweetly with his bandage -- and yeah, there's no eyeball there, and it's weird -- and they are very tender and sweet with each other, as usual. Tigh laments his loss of depth perception and how he can't get it right in the mirror anymore. Two things I would think he would have noticed he's shitty at before now. At least now he's got the excuse of only one hard-boiled eyeball left. When I said I hated him, I didn't really mean he should lose an eye and his wife should raise her slut level to toasterfucker. (I'm not saying I wouldn't have. I'm just not creative enough to have come up with this, and also I love him now.) Ellen starts into her big apology-slash-admission of guilt regarding selling out the Sharon/Anders rendezvous (to be fracked up with gunfire IN ONE HOUR), but... Cally manages to fuck things up even from miles away and/or beyond the grave.

Chief comes running in, totally freaked out about how Cally's on the execution list. So totally freaked out is Chief that he... seems to have shaved and moisturized before running to her aid. (I'd do some grocery shopping, maybe get a manicure, just to make sure. Send some old friends a casual hello on Myspace; the kind they don't feel like they have to answer, so you come out on top. Plan Cally's funeral. Read some New Caprica Quarterly cartoons.) Tigh is like, "What now?" The "source," also known as "obviously Gaeta," left the list of execution detainees in the dead drop, and Cally's on it. Chief babbles at length, and Tigh ignores it all: "Cally's in the group heading for map coordinate x-ray seven." Babble babble. That's cool that he actually contracted her uselessness, like a virus, and can't think straight in even this minor crisis all of a sudden. (Remember when his last girlfriend



spent weeks turning into an actual Cylon before his very eyes, and he got tortured to the point where he actually died for a second, and then his girlfriend shot herself in her own face, and then shot the military leader of the free world in a variable location? And he didn't even break a sweat the entire time, until his now wife shot this girlfriend in the chest and she died in his arms with his name on her lips? But he was still total class about everything? Remember when Chief was, for want of a better word -- relatively, I mean, taking into account the suicidal stuff and the physical assault of at least two other members of the crew -- phlegmatic? Don't you like this retard much better?)

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Tigh yells at Chief to chill and reminds him that in fact he can read a map, because they know the Cylon coordinate system, because it was in the list of freqs they used to talk to Racetrack. Chief babbles about this for a while, and Tigh tells him in very simple words to take some guys and go save Cally and stop yelling and stomping around. "Pull it together. You won't do her any good if you get caught too. Besides, the last thing your son wants is me and Ellen for parents." WORD. I love Tigh so much this season. They watch him stomp off into the distance and Ellen embraces Tigh, scared and thinking about how if that's how people are behaving these days, Anders is going to have her balls. And she's right.

Credits. Then, in the Tyrol tent, Chief stomps around and yells some more and Moves His Own Cheese all over the place before finally talking himself through some things and finding the list without losing one iota of his obnoxious freakout energy. (He also, and this is key, has been using terms like "Godsdamned" and "Holy frack" all season: not things a true son of Geminon would ever say. How much did Cavil take from him really?) Then he stomps out into the street and tells Seelix (a tech last seen helping Chief build the Blackbird, now with much less hair and a very stompy person in her own right) to get some people together so they can go to x-ray seven, also known as Pergamus Flats. They do a quick round of the We Are Lunatics dance, then watch the trucks full of the damned rolling out of town. Too bad the people on the other trucks don't have Chief stomping around on their behalf, but lucky that Roslin and Zarek are in the same transport group as Cally, or else they, like those 150 other

unlucky people, would end up like Vegas strippers in the cold desert night. The kind that saw stuff they shouldn't have.

Sharon gets out of her Raptor and the Marine with her uses the word "enfilade," as in, "We could catch enfilade fire from there, there, and along there." (In short, the word "enfilade" as used here means "shot in all of our faces"; that is, if they all walked in a line the enemy fire could shoot through all of them from the front or back, like a skewer, which is where the word comes from. It's nice for the toasters, or whoever is shooting at you that way, because the up/down angle determines that you can't shoot too long or too tight, because you're going to hit somebody no matter what, if your target is centered down the skewer. Use it in a sentence this week! Mine is going to be, "We have to go see The Covenant on a weekday, because I'm going to feel like a perv if we go in and get a bunch of teenagers coming at us in enfilade. Oh yeah? Vide please the great Mean Girls incident, April '04, and the Bring It On conflict of August 2000. I ain't going out like that again.") Sharon puts the Marines on the ridge and heads out to the rendezvous point, bringing us back to the PRESENT. ("Go Panthers!" "C-Bucks rule!")

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At Pergamus Flats, PROBABLY ABOUT FIVE MINUTES AGO, Chief stares through the binoculars at the trucks approaching, and sends his men to the corresponding ridge. "This is it. Lock and load." Chief finally notices that they've got Laura Roslin and Tom Zarek with them, proving that he didn't even read the list beyond Cally's name. Which is kinda Duck of him, frankly, considering the emphasis put on the whole "Read the names! Look at the names!" issue last week with Gaeta and Gaius. Seelix hates to see focus pulled from precious Cally as much as we all do: "Is there any sign of Cally?" Sadly, there is not.

Sharon fills Anders in at the rendezvous: rescue plan's in place and ready to go, and she's down here to coordinate the mission and evac, as well as snag the launch keys to the ships on the ground. "When can we meet with Colonel Tigh?" Anders tells her they'll wait until nightfall and then go into the city.

Chief wigs out about Cally, and then wigs double hard when she starts running. If he knew she were twisting time, space, and

gravity in order to completely revise the shot from not only last week but the previous ones from this episode, he'd probably wig out a bunch more. Seelix notes that the Centurions are lining up for the execution, and Chief figures out what it means and says to sight the bulletheads immediately. But of course, Cally and her bag of bullshit and myriad issues and pointlessness are running right at the rescue party -- enfilade, if you will -- so that they can't take out the guys currently lining up to execute the main characters of the show. The Platonic ideal of the situation we call "friendly fire." However, then something really cool happens, where Sharon and Chief -- miles apart and at two different operations, dealing with two different groups of Centurions, occasioned by two different hapless wives -- have basically the same thought. "Count to five, open fire," he says, and runs out toward his wife. Seelix tells one of the men to bring up the RPG. Man, I love the RPG. Launching grenades with a grenade launcher is like seeing a unicorn or kissing a baby, as far as things on TV that are awesome. Bring it on!

Anders starts to tell Sharon about the underground system of tunnels in New Caprica City that we've watched him start to tell her about like eight times, and which we'll see in this episode, but then Sharon hears the toasters and then the gunfire starts.

Seelix counts slowly by thousands, up to five, and Chief reaches Cally in the nick of time. More heartwarming, Roslin grabs Zarek and pulls him down the bluff with her. The bluff that apparently flips you backwards out of time and space so you're running upside down and in a whole other direction. But I don't know if it does that to them, because they spend the next bit rolling around in the dirt while everything explodes. I would like it if they got together, I guess.

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Anders is like, "Frack this, my finely honed guerilla instincts are telling me that people are shooting at us," but Sharon has the same thought that Chief had -- "trust me" -- and she waits for the Marines on the ridge... who take out the Cylons. Anders is like, "Thanks."

On Pergamus Flats, Chief comforts a wet and distraught Cally.

While Sharon's Marine chick is like, "They were waiting for us, LT.

Right where we thought they would be ONE HOUR BEFORE THE CLIFFHANGER," an insurgent comes running up to Anders to tattle on Ellen about how she stole the map and gave it to Cavil: "Found it on a dead skinjob. It's your handwriting, isn't it?" Anders clenches his fist, and all his other parts too.

Roslin grins in the dirt: "You all right, Tom?" Zarek says, "Been a while since I had a woman throw me to the ground. Not quite as much fun as I remember." Tom stares into the distance and thinks longingly of [Maier](#): "There was a man who could throw you to the ground and you'd damn well know you'd been thrown."

Seelix crouches over an injured Cavil, kicking a gun away from him: "Hurts, huh? Good. Then I hope it hurts a long, long time till you go to download city." She kicks the gun even further away so he can't kill himself and reload, and then stomps off looking for some more enemies to treat with zero honor and no respect, because that's just how the noncoms roll on this show now, apparently. Why do people so easily confuse war with cruelty? It's guns in the Temple again. You give up willingly what you thought you were fighting for.

Chief calls down to the Roslin/Zarek tangle, and oh, how sweetly is Roslin grateful to see him? "Good to see you too, ma'am," he says respectfully. Cally utters the same stupid kind of line she always says, humped up against him like a Leia to her triumphant Luke ("What happens now? Where do we go from here?" she actually says out loud) and he answers: "We're going home." But not like that! He calls down to Roslin and Zarek: "We're going home, Admiral Adama's on his way. We're getting off this rock. We're going back to Galactica." Everybody's like, "Finally! But also: four episodes in? After all the buildup?"

Three massages her neck, standing in New Caprica City. Lights and colors and sounds are strange. Cylons dream of electric neon. She sees some Colonial fetishes near a tent, ropes and sticks and big stones, and hears a baby crying. She sees herself carrying a child, and wakes up to it screaming, sweating in her bed on Colonial One. I knew she'd go crazy but I didn't think it would take five seconds.

Caprica Six and Baltar are in bed on Colonial One, and apparently

there's been a failure to launch. Caprica starts into the whole "it doesn't matter" spiel, and then Gaius goes on quite the rant. "You can stop that right now, okay? My ego's not so fragile as all that. These things happen. Or they don't happen. So what should we talk about? Should we talk about your day? How was your day, darling? How was your day at the office? My office?" Never one -- in any of her forms, real or imaginary -- to put up with his bullshit, she starts getting dressed as he continues to bitch and whine and go nuts. "Any news? No? Well, let me tell you about my day, because it was a hoot. I had the most fascinating chat with one of the Dorals. He's got this theory about sanitation being the key to regaining human trust and confidence. Something about toilet paper. No, lack of toilet paper, that's it. If people could only wipe their bums properly, there'd be a measurable uptick in the polls." It's very sad and very hard. Callis is acting hell out of this season. Caprica sighs. "Four months of this, Gaius. Four months of watching you slip further and further down into this well of self-hatred and loathing. Do you know what I've given up for you? Do you?" Especially if you assume that, when he's not around, there's a slimier, sexier Chip Gaius pouring martinis and making her feel cruddy; but even so, she really has given up a lot. The whole DEMAND LOVE thing is not easy, and even the other Sixes treat her weird. Baltar's response is equally valid, though. "Do you know, what with the occupation and everything, I can't really say I've given it that much thought recently." Whatever, she shrugs, and heads for the door. He pours a drink and begs her to stay, and as he takes a long-ass pull off the whiskey, she climbs back into bed with him.

Kara sits at Kacey's bedside, talking softly to her. Except it's not really to Kacey, and it's not really about Kacey, and it's not so much what she's thinking as what she would want her own mother to have said. At least once. "That doesn't look so bad. There's something that I wanted to say to you. I'm sorry that I left you alone. I didn't mean for you to get hurt. I was upset with myself. And not you, okay? Grown-ups do stupid things sometimes. We get caught up in our own little world, until it's almost too late." Leoben enters and Kacey smiles up at Kara. "You have no idea what I'm saying to you, do you?" Kacey nods adorably, looking up at her. "Okay. Time to take a nap." Kara stands, but Kacey grabs Kara's finger and pulls her back down beside her. Leoben watches, as Kara gives in. I have this awful

intuition that Kara's storyline is going to end up being even more horrifying than Sharon's, in the end. This is already hard enough.

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Three walks through New Caprica City, not insane to the naked eye. She sees the Oracle's tent from her dream, and walks right in. There's Amanda Plummer, always crazy, formerly [Honey Bunny](#) of course and currently known as Dodona Selloi "Don't be afraid," she says. "I know who you are. What you are. Poor thing. You must be terrified." Selloi pours some chamalla into her hand and licks it off. I do love the nutty religious angle, especially when the drugs get involved. People make frackin' awesome decisions when they're [fucked up on chamalla](#). "Do you have any candy?" See? Nuts. Three's like, "Um, no?" Selloi smiles. "Chamalla's so bitter." Oh yeah, Roslin used to eat candy too. "Zeus sees all. Sees you, number Three. Sees your pain. Your destiny. All the Gods weep for you." Three comes further into the tent and utters eight words that spell controversy: "There is no Zeus. No other God but God." (That's one of the Three Pillars of Cylontology, I believe.) "Well," Selloi sniffs, "You don't believe that anymore. You don't know what you believe, and that is why you're here." Three is very still, and very quiet, with this woman. Like she's waiting for an explosion, or for the Oracle to start freaking out. It's very nice, and very perfect for the scene, and it's not a Three we've ever seen. She is completely rational with her. It's great. "It's not true. I don't even know why I'm here. This is the stupidest thing I ever did," she grins. "It is your dream that brings you to me." Three's grin thuds in the sand. "How do you know about that?" Selloi gestures to her, and Three kneels across from her, shaking her head. "I have a message for you from the one you worship. He speaks through me to you, just as He speaks in your dreams. The message is...the fruit born of two peoples [Three's smile fades entirely] is alive. A child named after the wife and sister of the all-knowing Zeus: Hera lives." Three shakes her head sadly, thinks the word "crazy," says, "That's not true. The child is dead." But the Oracle is insistent: "You will hold her in your arms [like Kara and Leoben], and you'll know for the first time what it is to feel true love [like Kara and Kacey]. But you'll lose everything you've done here." They stare at each other in a prophetic impasse. "Wish I had some chocolate caramels," Selloi mumbles. Three's like, "Trade you for some Pepto."



Helo and Dualla, Executive Officers of their respective Battlestars, supervise preparations for the rescue op and the Pegasus's resumed journey toward Earth. "Will you quit looking at me like that?" asks Helo. Like what? "You know like what. Like we're never gonna see each other again. We will. It's a good plan, D." She sighs, he's right. "Take care of the Admiral," she says. "Take care of his son," Helo says. (Or "our son," which makes no sense, or better not make any sense, so I don't know why he said that, so it was just a loop issue or something.) Two interesting things I learned this week: Racetrack and Helo, the actors I mean, decided based on a fanfic that Racetrack was secretly in love with Helo, and they've been playing it that way ever since. The other thing is that Chief liked the characters of Seelix and Tarn so much that he inserted their names into every take of the scene where we first saw them, and they turned real. Turned out not so well for Tarn, who died on Kobol, but better for Seelix. Until now, I guess.

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On deck, a thick line of salt is poured along the floor as Helo speaks. "All right, people, you know how this works: Pegasus crew on the port side of the line, Galactica on the right." They line up across from each other (defilade, safe, facing forward, hands open; from dÃ©filer, "to scroll"), and look across, or down at the floor, or up into space. Racetrack reads from the Sacred Scrolls: "Their enemies will divide them. Their Colonies broken in the fiery chasm of space. Their shining days renounced by a multitude of dark sacrifices. Yet still they will remain always together." The crews speak as one: "Always together." They very deliberately erase the line of salt (Tears? All-purpose holy element? The old religions do it both ways) with their feet, and then the two crews embrace each other, promising they'll see each other again, and that really they won't ever be apart. (Gotta go with tears. Damn, that's awesome.)

Adama and Apollo stand nearby as prep continues. Adama asks why he keeps looking at his watch -- "got dinner plans?" -- and Apollo laughs. "No, I was just thinking. Sharon's probably on the ground by now." (AN HOUR PREVIOUS TO HALF AN HOUR AGO.) Adama gives him his brief (and has the same thought Sharon and Chief are having; he's always been in the middle of their relationship): "You'll find the rendezvous point there. Take the

civilian fleet and wait for me for 18 hours. If I'm not back in 18 hours, then find Earth." They agree, and Adama's voice goes quieter: "I'll see you at the rendezvous point." Apollo nods. "18 hours. Try not to be late." Adama promises to be there, even though he's getting old and he's a little slow. Apollo wishes once more that he could talk him out of the plan, but Adama's firm: "You can't. You tried." The Adama Theme goes nuts, even more Titanic-sounding than usual, as Apollo starts to say something sentimental, and Adama holds up a hand: "Don't. Don't make me cry in my own hangar deck." Apollo holds his tears back, just barely, as they shake hands and embrace. It is very touching, but I don't know how to explain it except to say that Bamber has his good days and then he has his very good days, and this is one of the latter. And that Adama can make me cry with a twitch of his moustache anyway. "Okay," says Apollo jaggedly, and Adama looks him in the eye: "I'll see you there." Apollo asks his Admiral for permission to leave his ship; Adama grants the Pegasus's Commander permission to depart. Apollo alights on a Raptor's wing and calls for attention. They salute each other, and -- Lee Adama could never cut the goodbyes short -- once more says, "18 hours." And Bill Adama watches his son leave, taking the Lie of Earth with him, so that he can stay and right his wrongs.

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Three sees Doc Cottle's mobile unit and stops to pet Jake. They have a crazy little conversation -- "You don't care who I am, do ya? All God's creatures in your eyes." -- and Doc Cottle wanders out to wonder why the leader of the fascist regime is talking theology with the dog. "Can't sleep?" Three claims bad dreams, and Cottle admits he didn't even know "you people" had dreams. That's my Cottle! She throws her shoulders back. "Oh, sure. Everybody dreams, Doc." She looks at his bloody smock and asks if it's human or Cylon blood. "Cylon. One of the Fives got pretty shot up today by the insurgents. But he's gonna make it." Three tilts her head. "You could've let him suffer," but that's not Cottle's steeze, of course. She smiles. "What about the baby? Sharon's baby Hera. When that child died on Galactica, why'd you cremate the body? It's the first Cylon-human hybrid, and you threw it in the incinerator?" Like she's skewering him. He shrugs and says a list of words that spell more controversy: "It wasn't my decision. That was the President's call. I was just following orders." Yikes! She drags her fingers through the blood, prodding him. "That's a

very funny thing. 'Cause this stuff all looks the same." Crazy! She's crazy! Or maybe she's turning sane, I can't tell anymore. I sure like her, though. Cottle takes off and Three heads back home.

On Colonial One, Cavil's whining: "She said, 'I hope it hurts you for a long, long time before you go to download city.' Then they just left me there! They left me in the hot sun with a bullet in my guts!" Doral sideswipes Baltar with a "what a noble race you are" snit, and Boomer's just agog: "How long were you there before you died?" Hours. "Eventually, I managed to drag myself over to some spent shell casings. I used one of those to scratch open my carotid artery. Skin is a lot tougher than you think." Aieegh! I hate the dude, but that's hardcore. "Now that's...three for me. Three downloads. The first one, I just got a headache. But I could handle it. Now it's worse and worse. This time it was like a frackin' white-hot poker through my skull. Not worth it. None of this is worth it." That's interesting. Puts a new spin on, for example, Doral's own suicide-bombing tendencies TWO YEARS OR SO AGO GIVE OR TAKE SEASON 2.5. "He's right, you know," groans Gaius. "It's not worth it. Which is what I believe I've been telling you all along." Doral rolls his eyes and begs Caprica to please control him. "Why don't you just shoot me, if that'll remedy the situation?" They ignore him some more. Doral wants to crack down harder, but Caprica protests that their resources are stretched "to the max" already. When Six says "to the max" it sounds really professional, because she is so scary. Cavil's bored with the whole talk; Three is just upset because "consensus used to be so easy," and now they're all fighting and confused. "Now look what they've done to us!" Doral tells her not to worry about it. "Worst comes to worst, we can always nuke the city and be done with it." Baltar's eyes pop out and run around the room, singing in high-pitched voices.

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In a tent, Anders tells Sharon to leave her dog tags behind, because they mark her as an atypical Eight. "No. You have no idea how hard I worked for these." He shrugs. "So our best guess puts the launch keys somewhere in the detention center. Just keep to the main streets, everybody'll think you're just a regular skinjob and they'll avoid you. But there's a lot of people out there looking to gut an unwary Cylon going for a stroll, so don't let anybody get close enough to stick a knife in you." She puts on

her shoes with a tiny OMG. "All right, thanks for the concern. It makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside." He asks, excellently, how she plans to find the launch keys, and she launches some exposition in return. "When I get inside and hook into the data stream, it'll feed me the location." He returns the favor by expositing that he's already got pilots standing by for when she gets them. Then some insurgents come in with Ellen, hands bound, screaming and asking for her husband. Anders looks at her like total trash and says to stick her down in the bunker until after the next briefing. Without skipping a beat, Sharon and Anders are like, "Okay, so you got everything?" She heads for the door and asks for a favor: "Just keep an eye out for Starbuck. I don't know if she's alive or if she's dead. But it's been four months." She nods. "I'll do what I can."

Down in the tunnels, Laura is lecturing Anders about how he has to keep Isis/Hera hidden at all costs. He expositos that they're keeping her on the move, along with other high-value targets, and that she'll be in a given location for three days at most. (Which is 71 HOURS AND 59 MINUTES LONGER than it will take Xena to snatch that kid right out from under your nose, of course.) "Sam, I need you to really hear me on this. Really. There is no one -- no one -- of higher value than Maya and her child. We cannot let them fall into Cylon hands." He's like, Gotcha. "How far do you want me to go? I mean, if it looks like the Cylons are gonna capture them..." Also not acceptable. "Don't let it get to that point. That's all." Anders asks if she's going to spill on the secret of the child, and she gets mysterious: "She may very well be the shape of things to come. That's either a blessing or a curse." Roslin takes off, and a gigantic lightbulb goes off over Anders's head so bright that it gives away everybody's location and they all get murdered but the only thing anybody upstairs can say is, "But is Cally safe?"

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Three sees a woman on the street carrying an infant and leading a toddler by the hand, and thinks really hard about babies and how to steal them. Doc Cottle is crusty, but not a good bluff.

Chief explains to Sharon's Marine (Gunnery Sergeant Mathias, apparently) how there are arms and munitions hidden in "key areas" throughout the city. (Like for example, wherever the most

civilians would be endangered by it, turning you into a suicide bomber, or like, if you were religious, we would profane your faith. That kind of thing.) Gunny Mathias offers some mortars and RPGs -- even a few shoulder-mounted anti-aircraft missiles -- from the Raptor, and Chief is like, Awesome. "When we give the signal, our people are gonna attack the airbase, the detention center, the power station, other critical facilities. The plan is to sow as much chaos and confusion as possible the moment Galactica and Pegasus arrive. That should help cover the evacuation." (You know who could accomplish that? Starbuck. With both hands tied behind her back and a gag in her mouth, she could fuck things up that bad. And then she'd be like, "What? What is it this time?" Or Gaius Baltar, except for how it's too bad he became a Christian and then went ahead and broke permanently. In his squirrely heyday he could cause that much chaos and confusion while eating breakfast.) But Mathias is no slouch: "No Pegasus. Just Galactica."

Roslin whips around, worried about Lee: "Why? Why no Pegasus? What happened?" Mathias still has a sense of humor -- common among the cast members who haven't been in a concentration camp for four months -- and shakes her head: "Don't know, sir. Way beyond my pay grade." Mathias and Tory, who is probably not actually a Cylon like I thought, discuss the plans for evacuation. "We've designated and assigned 500 block captains to cover each sector of the city. Each block captain is responsible for rallying and guiding the people in his or her sector along their escape route to their designated ship." (Like the Fire Marshal in the dorms! Ours was named Steve, and we called him the Hey Guys Guy, because he always smiled at us and said, "Hey Guys," and that was all there was to Steve, but then he was unanimously elected Fire Marshal for our floor in the hopes that one day there would actually be a fire, and he would go from room to room knocking on the doors and saying, "Hey Guys, there's a fire," adding a bit of levity to what would no doubt be a stressful situation.) Zarek wonders if they've been able to rehearse any of this, and thinks longingly of Maier, who could do the most bitchin' Caiaphas you ever heard -- "This Adama must die" and all that -- and you know, I miss Maier too, Tom. He sure did wanna shoot him some Adamas.

Roslin sparkles at Zarek: "Indeed. We've had three full-dress rehearsals under the guise of fire and natural disaster drills." I love the "full dress" there, like they were wearing crazy beards and can-can dresses and whatever. Mathias notes how it's going to be totally different when "the balloon goes up" (no idea), what with all the explosions, shooting, chaos, panic and total death happening everywhere. Roslin's equanimity is still unmatched: "They'll do fine. These people know that at some point, they're gonna be responsible for saving themselves. All we need to do is be ready and hope for the best." Roslin's equanimity is matched only by her redundant thoroughness: "What about Maya and Isis?" she whispers to Anders. He very nearly points his thumb back over his shoulder at the last scene, where they discussed it not five minutes ago, but he drops the 'tude because she's a lady. "I'm on it. I've got my two best shooters here. They're gonna be their escorts and make sure they get back to the ship." Roslin's inability to get out of conversational culs-de-sac is matched only by that of her buddy Lee Adama: "Gentlemen, I can't tell you why, but it is imperative that this woman and her child get off this planet. I trust you because I trust him." Is she back on the chamalla? Does she know she just had the same exact conversation three times with the exact same people in less time than it takes to smoke a Virginia Slims Ultra-Light 100? If you should ever wish to do so?

Ellen runs up yelling, with her arms behind her back, so I guess that concludes the briefing. Anders levels a very serious voice at Tigh: "We need to talk." Tigh stares and wonders what the hell she's done now. Poor guy.

Sharon walks through the city, and as has happened every other time they've ever let the poor woman out of her cage in the last WHATEVER, people immediately appear out of nowhere and start throwing shit at her and calling her a toaster. Which sucks, and did you know I really like her? But also: Galactica's all but abandoned. It's been -- far as we know -- basically just her, and Helo, and Adama for the last year and a half or so. After all that was done to her -- Pegasus and the abortion betrayal and losing Hera -- she got a year and a half with the two men that love her most. Alone, to heal. And now she's back among people again, and they're reminding her as hard as they can what it was like. It's not rage, it's sadness and shame. Remember how you never had the Sharon program in you, and how you were created to



love? Your entire purpose was just to love, and be loved in return? And how they got ahold of you, and twisted that all the way around? Remember why the cage was easier? At least then it was just your own hate, and not everybody else's.

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Anders takes it slow: "She sold us out." Tigh -- good form, old boy -- narrowly avoids the "What the hell," bending it in the last second like this: "What... are you talking about?" Anders explains about how the Cylons knew exactly where the rendezvous was. Tigh protests that this doesn't mean anything in particular about Ellen, but Anders shows him the map: "Colonel! The map that I drew for you. I gave this to you in your tent. You were gonna burn it, but then your wife offered to do it for you. I got it off a dead skinjob at the ambush. Do the math!" Ellen tries to explain, but gets the Boomer treatment from the other insurgents, who are instructed by Tigh to shut up. "He said he'd kill you. One of the Brother Cavils. I did it for you. Saul, it was all for you, I had to. I didn't have any choice. Don't you see that?" Questions without answers: I already made fun of Chief for ignoring everybody in his stomp quest to see his wife, the mother of his child, home safely. So I can't turn around and fault Ellen for doing the same -- but I don't want to. It's like suicide bombs: Tigh is okay ordering them, I just hate whoever would go through with it. I don't fault Ellen or Chief for putting Tigh or Cally a centimeter above everybody else, because that's just how it works. But I wouldn't countenance Anders letting it go either. I'm just hoping she doesn't die, because I've always really liked her. I already have no idea how Tigh comes back from this, just with what's happened so far. I don't want to think about it right now. Things are, I think, often a lot easier, when you're Anders. Which is actually a lot of the attraction, I think.

Sharon enters the detention center, plucking like a banana peel from her hair and rotten vaudeville vegetables from her clothes. (And like how come they can do that? If it were a Doral or Three, wouldn't they just kind of toss their asses in jail and keep walking? It fits Sharon's storyline and all, and definitely leads into this scene, but it makes New Caprica City life just that much more confusing.) She does some USB stuff with the detention center system, and then goes into another room, where "Drawer 3-7-8" opens By Her Command. She checks out its contents, and

then Nutty Three enters. (I want a better name for her, but I don't think Pharoah's Daughter technically has one. Midrash names her Bithia --  $\times'Ö'Ö\frac{1}{4}\times\textcircled{Ö}^{\circ}\times^{\text{TM}}\text{Ö},\times$ , daughter of God -- but Bithia-Three totally sounds like a speech impediment no matter how perfectly it works out thematically. Think I'm going nuts again? Check the title of the episode.) She can tell it's Sharon simply by her guilty look, and her jaw drops. "Oh my God, it's you." Sharon immediately pulls a gun on her, and she just stares. "You're betraying your own people. For what?" Sharon claims she's a Colonial officer now, and Three wrinkles her nose. "You're not one of them." Okay then: "I gave them my word." Still no. "That's not what counts. It's who you give it to." Sharon soldiers up. "I'm gonna have to shoot you now."

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"Hera lives," says Three. "Your daughter Hera is alive. Your new friends tell you that?" Sharon flips back into a momentary flashback of Hera's birth, and her death. "They faked her death, and they hid her from you." Sharon isn't buying: "You could say anything..." But Three interrupts, all on fire with prophecy: "Oh, I had dreams. I had strange dreams. I was having strange dreams that made me question my faith. Made me question God. And in the dreams, there was a human Oracle, so I went to see Dodona Selloi." Sharon steadfastly ignores her. "I'm not going to kill you, but I'm going to wound you, so you can't warn the others." Very polite, and even more polite to tell her the plan upfront. "The Oracle said that the fruit borne of two peoples is still alive, that Hera lives, and I would hold her in my arms, and I will know true love." But this is the part that just kills: "Put down the gun, and when I find her you can hold her too." There's a second, a split-second, and then Sharon shoots her in the knees: "Adama wouldn't lie to me." Three goes down, and it's horrible, and as Sharon's leaving she screams after her: "You're wrong. You're wrong!" What can you do? She's right. Sucks.

Sharon hands over the launch keys to Chief and notes that given the data, the ships on the ground still have enough tylum to make at least one jump. "Congratulations, by the way. I heard it's a boy." Chief's like, "Oh, right." She asks the son's name, and he stutters: "Uh, Nicolas. After Cally's grandfather." Her voice goes small. "Hey, Chief? You remember when you helped Helo spread Hera's ashes?" He nods, sadly. "You actually saw the ashes?" He's

confused: "Yeah. Of course. Why?" She looks at no place in particular, with a sliver in her heart. "Nothing. Just make sure Cally never lets her kid out of her sight." She wanders away, fighting back tears.

Helo enters Adama's office on Galactica and informs him that the Listening Raptor just jumped back to say that Sharon got the launch keys. He leaves with a smile and Adama very intensely punches the table joyfully. Here we go.

The phone rings in the Galactica rec room and Racetrack answers. "... Very well, sir." She hangs up and looks over at Kat, who is sitting very still at the table. The room is so empty now; remember how it used to always be full of people? "It's on," says Racetrack. And they get moving.

Adama stands in the Galactica CIC, speaking over the ship's PA. And this is what he says: "This is the Admiral. You've heard the news. You know the mission. You should also know there's only one way that this mission ends. And that's with the successful rescue of our people on New Caprica. Look around you. Take a good look at the men and women that stand next to you. Remember their faces. For one day you will tell your children and your grandchildren that you served with such men and women as the universe has never seen. And together you accomplished a feat that will be told and retold down through the ages, and find immortality as only the Gods once knew. I'm proud to serve with you. Good hunting." He hangs up the phone; Helo sets condition one throughout the ship. "Standby for a combat jump."

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TO BE CONTINUED ONE HOUR FROM YESTERDAY OR SOMETHING.

Here's the thing. In the historical plagues of Battlestar, so far we've had: an exploding bomb courtesy of Duck, a heavy-fire rendezvous courtesy of Ellen Tigh concomitant with a heavy-fire execution courtesy of Jammer, and now we're heading into battle. "To be continued" is kind of beside the point right now. It's a technical two-parter following a de facto two-parter, with the biggest cliffhanger taking place between the two pairs of episodes, so the momentum is good, but because of the Plagues, this means that next episode has to end with a gun to somebody's head. I've seen the show, isn't that how it works?

"I'm getting my men," followed by a gun to the head? The thing is, it should be easier than this to narrow down exactly who will have the gun to their head. Will it be Ellen Tigh? Who will be holding the gun? Will it be Gaius Baltar? Who, then, will be holding the gun? Or will it be any of the other thousands of men and women on the ground or in the sky or jumping away into space? And who's holding the gun then? I'm tired! Boom boom boom. See you next week for what I'm guessing is going to be a very exciting episode of this show Battlestar Galactica, in which more people will get shot, degraded, and probably engaging in some awful, horrible, timely behavior. Somebody's uppance is coming, though. That much I know.

# WITHOUT CRUTCHES

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 4 | Aired on 10.19.2006

*Exodus, Part II* - "Neither side is glorious. On either side they're just frightened men messing their pants and they all want the same thing -- not to lie under the earth, but to walk upon it -- without crutches." (Peter Weiss, *In War*) *Pegasus* is lost, but the colony of New Caprica is finally rescued from their captors, in various states of disrepair.

**Recaplet:** Dualla gives Lee another speech about the Adama awesomeness, but leaves the squick out of it, as the *Pegasus* heads for Earth -- or so you think! Saul Tigh poisons the hell out of Ellen Tigh, but as per usual with them, it's actually the sweetest -- not to say most romantic -- part of the season. They're so sad and weird. He cries a lot and it's very awful. The Cylons watch New Caprica burn from Colonial One as the insurgents start to fight and the non-combatants begin their evacuations; Laura Roslin takes back Colonial One, awesomely. Gaeta tells Gaius he's going to shoot him if he doesn't get rid of the Cylon nuke on New Caprica, and you can tell he means it. *Galactica* jumps into the atmosphere surrounded by *Vipers*! But immediately four base ships attack, and Adama is just about ready to die when the *Pegasus* arrives, and gets destroyed saving *Galactica*. Weird, weird, weird stuff happens with Anders, Kara, Leoben, and Kacey, but basically: Kara says she loves Leoben but it's clearly a lie, Anders says he loves Kara but she's clearly crazy, and Kacey is a red herring, of course. Speaking of: Maya is dead and Three ends up with Hera, just like Plummer Selloi said. Knowing that their concentration camp has been ruined for good, the Cylons take off, leaving a Three behind to nuke the whole planet, but she ends up linking up with Gaius, the only person on the literal planet who's crazier than she is. Oh, and the pornstache is gone!

**Recap:** Previously: God told every single person on the show that baby Hera was alive, but forgot to mention to anybody that Gaeta was obviously the administration mole; Ellen Tigh was a saboteuse, and Adama was a captain of futility. Now: Dualla and Lee are getting things ready on *Pegasus* for the search for Earth. Map coordinates with Hoshi, questions and concerns with the Civilian Fleet, et cetera. The thing that Lee can't seem to get together? His lack of concern for his dad's latest suicide mission.

"I know," says Dualla. "But we have to push forward. Keep the Fleet together. Find Earth." They agree that this is their duty, and Dualla points out that the Admiral has pulled off miracles aplenty in the past. Lee is so mesmerized by his wife's feel-good mantras that he randomly assents that he has not given up hope, and Dualla zeroes in for the kill: "Yes, you have. I saw the look on your face when you came back from the Galactica. Like you were never gonna see him again." Oh, that look. Between the fact that Lee Adama whines his way through all his waking hours anyway -- not to mention the bizarre obesity prosthetic -- I thought it was just noodles repeating on him. Lee reminds us of the stakes and the breaks: "He's taking on too much for one half-strength Battlestar to handle. And that's not opinion, that's military fact. He's not coming back from this. None of them are." Dualla admits that, and says they should just totally ignore the deaths of the crew of the Galactica that have not yet happened, and focus on moving the Fleet to safety, like Lee was saying last week before those noodles started in on him. Well, the goodbye last week was pretty heartbreaking so maybe that is what's doing it. The other thing is that this is [the only Dualla I like](#), no matter how repetitive it actually gets: "You can do this. You can get us there. You are Commander of this Fleet, and you will guide us to safety. And you will do it no matter the cost. Because you're an Adama." She's the voice that brings them home, still. Lee, feeling like a man again, tells her he is proud to serve with her, and also to be married to her, and then gets back to business.

Down in the insurgent bunker, Anders is having his fifteenth nervous breakdown, and as usual, he's got a good reason. Specifically, three insurgents dead -- "and if that Marine Sergeant wasn't on her game, they'd have killed us all" -- thanks to Lady MacTigh. Saul Tigh is so not feeling this, but he knows Anders is right. Anders is not taking Shut Up for an answer, though: "You 'get this': If Sharon had been killed, not only would we not get the launch keys, but the Cylons would know that we were in direct contact with Galactica. Now this whole plan, the fate of this whole city, would have fallen apart. Get it?" Tigh's like, "Get it? I invented it." But they already had the whippersnapper conversation a couple weeks ago, and Anders defeated him with the one-two punch of A) You guys left me for a year on an irradiated planet full of rape farms, and B) Now my wife has been abducted and/or killed. So I think Anders is actually trying to do



the right thing here, and maybe putting on a fair amount of bluster in order to make the point. Meaning I don't think he's as wild nuts as this scene might make him seem. We've seen Tigh do it and we've seen Kara do it too, yell louder than they mean to so other people will shift their asses, and the three of them are like the same guy at various points in life. A Portrait Of Drunk Jenny. But what's he being so hardcore about? What's the point? "If you don't want to do it, I understand. But believe me, Colonel, someone is gonna do this. Now, it would be better for her sake if it was you." And there's Ellen, standing in the back of the shot, as Anders takes off. Credits. Damn.

Ellen sits next to her husband, distraught but calmer now. "I had to do it, Saul. I had to. It was all for you. And I want you to know that I would've done anything to save you." He assures her that he knows this, and that everything's going to be all right. There is more love in his one eyeball than in most people's whole bodies. Ellen comes clean about all of it: boning Cavil to get Tigh out of detention, the whole bit. She is very very intense and very sympathetic the whole time. She curls up against him, protesting that she didn't want anybody to die as a result of her actions, and then she looks him dead in the eye. "I could use the drink." She takes a cup from his hands with a sad smile, and looks into his eyes with a stunning amount of love and grace as she takes a drink. "You've always been there for me when I needed you," she mumbles. "Oh, I'm exhausted. I feel like I could just curl up here." She falls into his shoulder and he puts his arm around her. "Should've listened to you, Saul," she laughs. "Should've stayed on Galactica." He tells her not to worry about any of that now, and just to try and sleep. She murmurs that she is indeed tired, and her eyes close. The cup drops to the floor. And Tigh begins to sob. "I love you, Ellen. Do you hear me?" And Saul Tigh lays her body softly down on the bunker bench, and weeps.

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On Colonial One, Gaeta's boredly drawing a Cylon being hung or murdered or something as Baltar waxes bitchy at the Cylons about how they should have listened to him: "Too comfortable in your predictions of success to even consider the possibility of defeat," he says, which is ironic considering that's like his theme

song. "And where are we now? And more to the point, where's Laura Roslin? Where's Tom Zarek? At large. Whereabouts unknown." Three and Simon roll their eyes but don't speak. "Probably with Colonel Tigh, solidifying the insurgency's hold over the public's imagination." Finally Three speaks up and asks what the hell he wants from them now, then. "Leave. Pack up your Centurions and go," he says levelly. "Please, go." And then Three says something interesting and not that sympathetic, even for a Cylon-lover like me: "And then what? What would you do if we really just left you here? You'd live out your lives in peace and never trouble yourselves with thoughts of us again? Or would you raise your children with stories of the Cylon? The mechanical slaves who once did your bidding only to turn against you. [True.] Killers who committed genocide against your race. [True.] And occupiers of this city [True!], until we just ran away [Give it a shot!]. Would you tell them to tell the story to their children? And to their children's children? And nurse a dream of vengeance down through the years, so that one day they could just go out into the stars and hunt the Cylon once more?"

Which... I guess so? But that's not actually the problem, so she's really just kind of taking a stance. She's not in this because she's afraid that, ten generations from now when humanity is viable again, they're going to do something; she's in this because... They Have A Plan. I mean, she's right, but that's not her argument, so what the hell. It's a good speech and one that would work if she hadn't already expressed her own feelings on the subject, and an important thing to say. I fully agree with the speech in theory, but it feels shoehorned into her mouth. Gaius says it's blood for blood, but that it has to stop one day, which is something you get in Greek stories a lot. Iphigenia to Cassandra to Clytemnestra to Orestes and then you get Athens. Blood for blood. Three just smiles and thinks about how she's already crazier than he can deal with, but just then Gaeta looks away from his cartoon and notices how all of New Caprica is on fire, down below them. If this were about the Middle East, you might think the fires everywhere looked like oil wells. But also: "Hunt the Cylon once more"? When did that happen to begin with? Before the original Armistice? I don't know, Benjamin Franklin said there was never "a good war or a bad peace," and I have my theories about the Armistice and the confederation of the Colonies to begin with, but I think that what we're seeing is the

reversal of that for once: the Bad Peace of Season 2.5, when the Fleet turned on itself, becoming the Good War of Season 3.0, when everybody got their shit together. (Which is, coincidentally, the subject of my essay in [this book, So Say We All](#), coming out from BenBella Books this week, edited by Tom Zarek himself, so go read it.)

Down in the city, Tory Foster's addressing her block captains and wowing at Anders's awesome explosions everywhere. She administrates the evacuation, reminds them of their drills, and sends them with the blessing of the Gods. Maya comes up with Hera in her arms, asking Tory to thank Laura for taking care of her and the baby, but Tory doesn't have time for Maya's mess: "Tell her yourself when this is all over." She smiles down at peaceful Hera and wishes "we" (meaning "Maya" and also "all the refugees") were as chill as the baby. She sends Maya off with the block captains and runs around issuing orders and generally being so freakin' awesome. This is by far her best episode so far; I can't wait to see what goes down with her.

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Anders and his insurgents unearth their weapons from under the Pyramid field in the square and exposit that they're going to hit the detention center and free all the people.

Up in space, Kelly (the current Gaeta, I think) is talking about the "decoy squadron," and then Kat is in space doing that horrifically obnoxious "NOW NOW NOW" stuff some more. Kelly confirms that the drones her squad is dropping match the signatures of a Battlestar, so the Cylons will be reading two Battlestars incoming in the next scene. Which will cause them to freak out.

Up on Colonial One Gaeta is yelling into the phone about evac (for the Cylons? The administration? Not sure, since he can't know about the civilian evacuation in front of them) while Caprica attempts to comfort poor Gaius, who's realizing that his year and a half of bullshit was even less pointy than he even thought last week, since it's all going to hell now: "We'll start over, Gaius. A new city to rise out of the ashes." Gaius isn't buying; he's pretty sure New Caprica will be "buried like the cities of old" and "consumed by the wrath of God" and things of this nature. It's

pretty bleak, but also kind of his dream come true, at this point. If it can't be a monument to his heroism and leadership, which, clearly that's a bust, let's just forget it ever existed. Boomer comes in with the fake news about how two Battlestars just jumped into orbit. "Adama's back."

Racetrack and Kat, out in orbit, confirm that two basestars just jumped in and started launching Raiders, so they've done their job with the drones. They head back to Galactica.

Up in Kara's apartment, Leoben's worried about the insurgents and wants to go find out about the deal. I'm confused because none of the other Cylons seems to be aware that Leoben even exists, and he's never at the meetings, and so what help can he possibly be? Kara is not interested in being left and trapped in the apartment during a civil war, but, like: he's not got a whole lot of options, so he tells her to stay put. She responds by jumping on his back and trying to beat him up, and he knocks her out and leaves her on the floor. Kacey is like, "She can't even pee without me knocking myself senseless, but apparently it's cool to leave me with her unconscious body?"

Dirty insurgents and refugees run all over the place and go crazy, and Laura and Tom Zarek are... very close these days. She sends him to the shipyard, where I guess the launch-key ships are, and he's like, "You coming?" She points up at Colonial One and grins a tiny bit. "My ship's up there." She is so awesome. I love that Laura Roslin will take a minute out of her busy citywide riot to go looking for Cylons and Baltars to smack. Zarek admires her flair for drama and grabs a random guy... who turns out to be a very defensive Jammer. Zarek's like, "I don't know about any self-hating SS officer mess, but go with Laura." They wink at each other and give a quick hasta before heading out to their separate evacuation points. I wonder if Laura cleared the whole Colonial One thing with Tory Foster. Tory Foster HATES a flair for drama. [Remember the debate?](#) "Cutesy pantyhose bullshit is one thing but we've got press to deal with."

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As Galactica gets ready to actually get involved for real -- Can we talk about Helo's hair? I love it! He looks like a waiter at the best

restaurant in the universe -- Three figures out about the drones. Leaving one question, which is Simon's, since he didn't get to talk yet this season: "Where's Galactica?" Baltar stares.

Some dude on New Caprica is like, "They've got us pinned down. We're trapped!" Which is the cue for... Galactica to literally fall out of the literal sky directly towards New Caprica City through the atmosphere. The reason these recaps are so short, not that you're complaining, but the reason is that the actual scripts are super-short. Every time Leoben or Kacey get involved, everything goes into slo-mo. Any time Cally's in trouble, slo-mo. Anytime spaceships do anything, the music goes crazy and there is space porn of explosions that goes on forever. Fabulous to look at, teeny-tiny on paper. It's not slow or lightweight as an experience, it's just a lot weighted toward the visual, which I really like. So if me saying that Galactica is actually falling out of the sky like God's giant fist onto the Raiders and Cylon bullshit spaceships, and shooting Vipers out of itself at a prodigious rate, if that doesn't paint the picture, I don't have a lot of options. It's as big as the sky and getting bigger and there are orange lights and fires all around. I think next week will be talkier, but just as horrible to live through or more. Helo launches all of the Vipers -- Hotdog! Hotdog gets to say some pithy lines about how he's "rolling in hot" or whatever. I missed Hotdog! -- and then Galactica jumps away again. The forgotten chapter in The Art Of War that just says, "BOO!"

On the ground, Chief notices that there are suddenly Vipers everywhere, which means it's really happening, which means it's awesome, and also Galactica just did something beautiful and insane to look at, and now the Vipers are shooting all the buildings, and people are running for their evacuation ships, and everything is exploding, and everybody is running, and everybody is screaming their asses off, because it's awesome and scary.

In the detention center, Anders's guys blow a bunch of locks and cells open and mobilize the prisoners toward the shipyards. Anders finds Kara's apartment. Obviously Kara's apartment was in the detention center, but I didn't put it together, even with the whole "Let me out" scene. Or the myriad other clues, like the screaming torture victims. I don't know. I guess I just thought it was in a shitty part of town. I wasn't thinking. For some reason

that makes it even creepier. He finds Kara on the floor, still knocked out, and is very happy and very scared all at once, and also very worried about what she's been up to in there, because he's already imagined even worse things than the very horrible things that have been going on in there.

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Back on Galactica, Helo is firing spaceship words at a fearsome rate, and Kelly lets everybody know that two baseships have jumped in from the nebula. Which apparently they were planning on -- they can use the Galactica to lure them both away, and that'll give the evac ships enough time to get away. Except suddenly there aren't two but four baseships, which the Admiral readily admits is not doable. Sparks are flying all over CIC, like real bad, just shooting directly out of the equipment, and they're getting shoved to and fro, and Edward James Olmos is shouting nonsense, and Helo is like, "We can't maneuver, we're blowing up in these areas, and our jump drives are dead." Adama -- with pieces of his ship literally flying at his head and shooting sparks all over the place -- takes a deep breath and tells everybody it's been an honor.

It is silent in space as Galactica goes down. The baseships take heavy aim at her and she drifts, on fire all over, systems dead. Admiral Adama gets ready to die, the evacuation a failure, humanity's only hope is the Pegasus and her civilian Fleet. New Caprica and the Battlestar Galactica end here.

Except they don't! Pegasus jumps in, all shiny and awesome, and Apollo comms to his father: "Galactica, Pegasus. Let us take some of this work off your hands. Get your FTL up and ready, and we'll take care of the rest." Adama damns his son for breaking protocol and coming back, under his breath, orders Helo to get the FTL back online, and then thanks his son sweetly, and proudly, and under his breath.

In Pegasus CIC, Dualla and Apollo rapidly figure out that the basestars are herding them into the middle of their death voodoo formation. "Steady as she goes," says Apollo. "Take us right into the center." I take back everything I ever said about him. He's a good boy. Dualla notes they won't last long in there; he agrees.



He's an Adama.

In the detention center hallway, Kara wakes up and immediately demands that her husband put her down. He's like, "It's cool! It's cool!" She's still a little wild, asking in wonder if it's really him. "Baby, it's really me. But listen, we don't have time. We're going to the ships, and we're gonna get the hell off this frackin' planet." She grins hugely -- she's game for this plan -- but asks what he did with Kacey. (Like, "Awesome that you're here... hey, where'd you stash my daughter while I was passed out?" It's very sad for some reason, because she's like, if all the dreams of four months are coming true, why would anything go wrong? She's imagined this way too many times for it to go wrong.) "Who's Kacey?" Kacey. She's my daughter. "Kara, who's Kacey?" he asks again. "She's my daughter!" Kara shoves him and runs back down the hallway, skipping and jumping past insurgents and prisoners, back toward her cell.

On Colonial One, Simon and Three agree that it's time to evacuate the ship onto Heavy Raiders. "I'll stay behind and set off the nuke," Three offers. I think she just wants to look for Hera. "You should go as well, Caprica," she says, furthering my hypothesis. "And you," she says to Gaius. "I don't think you'll want to be here after we've gone. There's a place for you, too." YES! Gaius on a Cylon ship! Fabulous! He's like, "For real?" She smiles enigmatically and says some more of that creepy machine logic she always says: "Well, you were right and we were wrong. Should be some reward for that." Caprica's like, "Totally!" But Gaius is still feeling the drama of how DEMAND LOVE was always a bad idea in practice, and he sold his ass knowing that. "I just wanna sit here and die," he moans, and even Caprica's a little bored by this, but then Gaeta appears out of nowhere and cocks a gun at Baltar's head. "You're gonna get your wish, Gaius."

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Galactica CIC, where Kelly tells us that almost all of the civilian ships have jumped away. (Which makes the nuke plan make even less sense.) The Galactica FTL is back online, but Pegasus has been beat to hell. "I don't think she has a single plane in the air," he says, worried. Adama assures him that Apollo left the Vipers

down there to guard the civilian ships: "He knew that was a one-way trip. He'll evac before the end." Helo asks if he's sure, and Adama SCREAMS at him. "Land our birds! Let's get the hell out of here." Helo follows this order with a grin. "All wings, Galactica. Come on home. Combat landings authorized. Repeat, come on home." Everybody gets ready to jump.

On Colonial One, there's an interesting thing happening. Remember last week, how Caprica was so totally polite with Gaeta and he didn't even look at her? And now he's calling Baltar "Gaius"? There are a lot of different kinds of jealousy. So Gaeta's got this severe drama happening with the gun to Gaius's head, and Caprica's trying to talk sense to him, but sense is not what he's interested in talking: "I believed in you. In the dream of New Caprica." Caprica is making calming gestures about how they all did, but Gaeta shakes his head. "No. Not him. He believed in the dream of Gaius Baltar. The good life. Booze, pills, hot and cold running interns. He lead us to the apocalypse, and I turned out to be --" I don't know what he was going to say there. "An idiot," probably. But also, it's a terrible thing to hijack an election, you know? So the "I" word that Gaius is about to say is the right word, but maybe in the wrong context. "An idealist. There's no sin in that."

So, but let's talk for a second about complexity, because it's kind of the same deal as the suicide-bomber stuff: Roslin was wrong to steal the election, but it so happened that Gaeta's actions regarding that huge misstep are the reason we're all here now. Gaius's "dream of New Caprica" was only as the quickest route to an election win. He filled in the blanks after the fact, but he ran with the New Caprica platform because he wanted to screw Laura over. Not authentic, right? But then there's Gaeta, whose idealism checked Roslin's rampant bullshit, which put Gaius in office, which put them on New Caprica, which is why Gina killed herself, which is why the Cylons came, which is why Gaius had no options but to surrender, which is how we all got to where we are right now. And where Kara is, and Ellen and Saul are, right now. When Gaius says "idealist," he thinks he's saying that Gaeta was too much of a pussy to play ball with the Cylons, so it hurt his feelings, but that's not really what he's saying at all: he's saying that Gaeta's assumption that everybody plays by the rules leads in a direct line to this moment. And not only that, but the most subtle accent to Gaeta's character has always been his hero

worship of Gaius Baltar. He had the option of staying on Galactica, and chose to separate from military service and go with Gaius to the planet surface. The second that Gaius lost faith in himself -- when he signed the death warrants on the detainees -- is the second that Gaeta realized how bad things really were, and how bad they'd always been. Everybody gets what they want, in the ugliest and most twisted way possible. And it's still happening, and I think what Gaeta was going to say was not "idealist" but something like "I turned out to be the one that did it." Which makes me very sad, and very worried for Gaeta, between that and Chief's creepy choking scenario before, except that A) Jammer is clearly going to die horribly aboard Galactica, and B) at some point somebody's going to realize he was the mole, and probably C) everybody will realize that the Collaborator Witchhunt is a bad idea at that point, but Gaeta will still hold a grudge. That's my guess.

"Everything you say about me is true. Every word." And I'll say this: he finally at least gets that. After all the lies and the collateral damage, Gaius Baltar does understand just how shallow his identity actually is. What's weird is how totally sad that is. "But you have to listen to me. The Cylons have a nuke in this complex. Nobody, and I mean nobody, is getting off this planet alive unless I stop D'Anna." It's not that he doesn't want to be a hero -- he's constantly looking for ways to be a hero -- he's just... really incredibly bad at it. Caprica gasps that Three will kill him, but he's pragmatic: "Then she'll kill me. Or it'll be down to Mr. Gaeta. Either way, the human race dies with me." (This part is iffier, but I think that the show's done its homework connecting Gaius and only Gaius to nuclear power, meaning that he actually might be the only person that can stop her because he's the only one who can take care of the bomb, or something. Whenever there's a bomb, it's Baltar's, back through all the seasons.) Gaius takes Gaeta's gun and shoves it against his chin, and begs for Gaeta to shoot him. Things are tense and more than a little confusing for all three of them, and finally Gaeta shoves him: "You have one chance to put things right. Do you understand me? Get the frack out of here! Stop that nuke! Go!" (Except the Colony has already evacuated, so I don't know what the deal is there either, come to think of it. I guess maybe they wouldn't be able to jump away from it far enough to keep the Fleet from getting blasted? Or this is being told out of order and the Colony

hasn't actually left, suddenly? Except Caprica is now dragging him out of Colonial One, and when they reach the ground everybody will have gone, so I have no idea. At the time, actually watching it, these questions don't really detract from the awesome, and you can't expect Gaius to know the state of the evac op at any given time, so maybe he's just being a drama queen, because wouldn't that be weird.)

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Apollo gives final orders to the Pegasus crew and then commands everybody to abandon ship. "Good work, and I'll see you on the other side." It's a neat moment, but once Dualla clears out the last of them, and it's just Lee and his ship all alone, it becomes really very touching. "Thank you," he tells her, and leaves. She rams one basestar, is torn apart, and then some of the resulting space trash manages to take out another basestar. And that's the end of the cruel story of the Pegasus, who lasted longer than any of us thought she would: the ghosts onboard are just as much to blame for Gina as Gaius is, and now she is sacrificed to redeem humanity of New Caprica's mistakes. We only really knew her for a short time, specifically almost the entire time I've been recapping, so there's not that much to say. But she faced things. She looked them right in the eye and she didn't flinch, which is something that happens a lot on Galactica: they second-guess. They worry. When you think about what she's gone through since the attack on the Colonies, the blood and the screams not even Lee could entirely wash out of the floors and the walls: she didn't give up, in the end. She was more like them than they could admit. She didn't worry. She didn't second-guess. She acted. She did what she thought needed to be done, and she survived. Might be hard to admit, or hard to hear, but we were safer with her than we are without, no matter what her history. And they've become more like her, in the last two years, than any of us could have imagined possible.

Kara races back inside her apartment, looking everywhere for Kacey. Things get very slo-mo and very creepy, as Leoben creeps, creeps, creeps down the stairs with the child. "I knew you'd be back. I saw it." Commercials and willies attack, and then more slo-mo creep, creep, creeping. He won't give up the kid

until Kara "says the words." What words? "You know what I want. I want to hear you say them. And I want the rest of it. Just like I told you." She wrinkles her nose. "Fine. I love you." He leans in: "Say it again." She says it more solidly this time. It's a little more true-sounding: "I love you." And he kisses her. (And she kisses back. And if you don't know what that is like, that particular horrific surprise party you can throw yourself in those moments, that trapdoor into realizing you're basically pretty disgusting to even yourself, you're a lucky son of a gun indeed. Doesn't last long but it's got a hell of a kick.) She kisses him back, and asks with a hiss: "Was it everything you thought it would be?" That and more. "I'll never forget this moment," he says. She kisses him again, one last time: "Neither will I." And then she stabs him, and he drops, gurgling. Anders enters with a gun; Kara grabs Kacey, and they leave with him: "I'll explain later." Which, given that not even Starbuck realizes what just happened there, entirely, seems like a tall order -- not to say an empty promise. Poor Anders, thinking he bagged the "fun" kind of crazy. Poor Kara, thinking she's free.

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Gaius, Caprica, and Three run around grab-assing and looking for each other and the baby, who you can hear crying. Three, ripping up I think Selloi's tent at one point, grumpy-grunts, "Fracking liar," which is hilarious. Finally, Gaius finds Maya on the ground, dead, with Hera in her arms. Chip Six kneels, having suddenly appeared for a moment: "It's her, Gaius. The first of God's new generation." Caprica arrives, so of course Six disappears, and Caprica's a good deal more secular -- besides leaving out the Crazy Six Baby Math -- only wondering at the miracle that Hera has been spared once again by God. Three approaches and asks to hold the baby; like a person not in charge of himself, or gripped by the power of this moment, hands her off to the Pharaoh's Daughter. She walks away with the child in her arms, and Gaius pulls out a gun, pointing at the back of her head. Caprica touches his arm. "No. She's not going to set off the nuke, not anymore. Come on, Gaius. We have to go." Man, that is one fucked-up family. Picture Gaius Baltar, Caprica, Three, and Chip Six, raising a baby, on a Cylon basestar. Where people apparently run around naked all the time. This is going to be the best season

ever.

Tory Foster, Jammer, and Laura Roslin board the abandoned Colonial One. Laura seats herself at her desk -- I wonder if Gaius kept the Olympic Carrier note? I wanna say he did, if only because he wouldn't care -- and removes her diary from its wrappings, the biggest Olympic Carrier note of all, placing it squarely on the desk before her. "All right," she says, quietly at first. "I'm ready to go," she smiles. And Colonial One takes off. Did she just... elect herself President again? That is SO AWESOME. I love how her choices just get worse and worse, but you still have to admit she's better than anybody else at being President, and it's mostly because she does adorable shit like that. "I'd like to be President right now, okay? I'm not saying I'm necessarily going to airlock you, but I do have a certain persuasive regal air." I bet she got KILLER customer service back when malls still existed. Which is 99 percent of politics anyway.

Oh, hey -- this part's fucking awful, just so you know going in. I don't even want to talk about it yet so I'm going to make some lists instead. The first list goes like this: Saul Tigh. Kara Thrace. Felix Gaeta. The second list goes like this: Poison. Knife. Gun. And the last one goes: Ellen Tigh. Leoben Conoy. Gaius Baltar. The last list is of the people that took the thing that mattered most, and because of love, destroyed your heart. The people that you built your world around, because of love or because you had no other choice. The middle list is what you did next, because you couldn't get out. And the first list is the people that have to go on, now. The ones that "survived."

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Chief ushers people around the Galactica deck, doing what he does best, back where he belongs. Not stomping -- although I think the scary stomping will come back next week and it's going to be hella bad -- and a huge smile breaks out across his face when he sees Kara and her daughter. "Oh, my Gods. Captain! I thought you were dead." She smiles carefully. "Yeah, so did I." (Brilliant poster on the forums who compared her to Persephone, spending half a year in hell with the man who stole her from her family.) Chief asks about Kacey, and Anders comes running up to



ask as well, and Kara opens her mouth to explain -- that she's not alone, that there's a part of her that he didn't touch, that she has the option of redeeming her own childhood, that there are some kinds of love that are inviolable -- and a third person comes running up. A beautiful woman. And what she is saying is this: "Kacey? Kacey! Oh, my little girl! Oh, Mommy missed you so much! Thank you. Thank you! Thank you. When the Cylons took her I -- I thought -- but you saved her. Gods bless you." And Kara smiles with a huge amount of grace and pain, and hands the woman her child, and smiles awkwardly and can't speak. And the woman and her daughter Kacey disappear into the crowd, and all around them, people are reuniting with their loved ones.

Adama welcomes each new refugee aboard. Sharon Agathon, untroubled and untouched, walks through the joyful masses like any other crewman and throws herself into Helo's arms. Adama welcomes his son back to the Galactica: "I guess you didn't understand my orders, huh?" Lee quirks his neck at his father. "Never could read your handwriting." They smile proudly at each other. Saul Tigh's voice rings out across the deck, waiting for his welcome from the old man: "Permission to come aboard, sir." He clambers down from a Raptor's wing, old and infirm, on a crutch still. Bill doesn't betray anything -- the shock of the leg, the eye, the broken heart you can see just as easily -- as he grants Tigh welcome. He smiles at him fully and looks him in the eye, and they salute. "You did it. You brought 'em home, Saul." The tears come up and they go right back down. "Not all of them." Bill puts his hand on Saul's shoulder, and says, "I'm sorry." There is a moment of silence between them; how does he come back from this? Can Bill save him one more time? I don't know how this can work. It hurts. (How in fuck did my favorite characters become Colonel Tigh and Gaius Effin' Baltar? Seriously, I'm asking. Somebody's getting a letter.)

The deck hands, the pilots, the colonists sweep Adama up in their arms and cheer his name, over and over, hoisting him into the air, cheering his triumphant return. He watches Tigh wander away, crippled and slow. Kara feels a new hole in what's left of her heart, and realizes how alone she always was and how much more alone it's possible to be. Tigh walks slowly past the Chief, past Helo and Sharon, past Lee and Dualla, cheering the old man on. He looks so small. He gave them everything: his eye, his strength, his body, his heart, the love of his life, keeping them

alive so that the Admiral could come in and save them all. Choked off the part that would shrink from the ugliest acts of war, in order to fulfill his purpose and keep the fight strong. And he did this willingly: he believes in Adama as much as any of them do. More, obviously. And now he is broken and small, and Adama's getting the cheers Saul has been working -- literally, working himself to death, for months -- to give him. And if he were strong enough, if he had anything left, he'd be cheering too. That's how much he loves Bill. The only other person with the capacity for that much love, the only person who would go that far for love, he killed earlier today. Maybe they were really the perfect couple, and all the fights and drinking and cattin' around, maybe it was just because their love would have burned too hot any other way. Maybe they were always the best of us, after all.

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Weird, right? Not as weird as the other train of thought, which is about how, without Ellen in the picture, Bill's absolutely the only thing Saul's got, so Laura better hope for real that this impending (and awesome) hookup with Zarek I feel about 70 percent certain about is real, because you do NOT wanna be the Caprica Six in the middle of that particular fifty-year epic bromance. I'm just saying.

Tory comes to Laura on the Colonial One, prefacing with how they're still double-checking Fleet manifests, but that it would seem Maya didn't make it off New Caprica. And the baby? Tory breaks down, showing heretofore unexplored range and awesomeness. "I was there when the two guards left to take them to their ship," she says, voice breaking. "I don't know what happened. I'm so sorry." She looks at Laura, exhausted, close to breaking. Brittle. "I let you down. And I know that." Tory Foster weeps. Roslin summons a brave smile and shakes her head. "No, you didn't. It's not your fault. This is bigger than us." She looks down at a tattered, dear picture of Maya and Hera. "This is life."

And in Adama's quarters, he very deliberately shaves off his mustache, looks himself in the mirror, and heads out into the corridors of Galactica.

Forgiven.



# THE TRUTH ABOUT RECONCILIATION

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 5 | Aired on 10.26.2006

*Collaborators* - Laura takes back the office of President, and Zarek presents her with a bouquet of murders in order to win her favor. Adama's all, "She's mine!" and threatens a military coup unless Zarek hands her the reins once and for all, but Tigh is just thinking about his wife that used to cheat on him all the time, and is no help at all. It's just like *Dawson's Creek* with old people!

**Recaplet:** Tigh's group of insurgents continue to make really great moral choices up on the Fleet, forming a Star Chamber to carry out secret trials and assassinations of people they believe were Cylon collaborators on New Caprica. Bags over heads, the whole tamale. Jammer bites it, but once "The Circle" sets their sights on Felix Gaeta, Sam Anders opts out because of the general nuttiness of the people involved. Chief gets Starbuck to replace Anders on the secret jury, which is just fine because she has now lost not only her entire mind, but is going door-to-door to borrow more mind that she can then lose. Saul Tigh's drunken CIC antics -- and incredibly terrifying ability to murder anybody at all -- make him the front-runner in the "I Am A Total Fucking Lunatic" competition the crew's got going, but -- wait, what's this? Starbuck: tortures Gaeta, admits openly to Anders that her PTSD is responsible -- and that he might be next -- and then gets her crazy ass soundly dumped. "I just feel like hurting people all the time," she says. So as per usual, Tigh and Starbuck are in a competition to see who can be more of an ass, and as usual, it's a dead heat. Good to have the show back. Meanwhile, on the new Cylon basestar set, Six dumps Gaius and Three moves in for the kill. Roslin -- after finding out that momentary President Zarek signed off on the Circle's actions with a secret executive order -- is sworn back in, and with her acceptance speech -- grants the entire Fleet a general amnesty. (Ellen and Jammer are like, "Thanks, babe!" but everybody else is too busy crying, because that part was fucking amazing.)

**Recap:** Previously, Leoben said Kara was gonna K-I-S-S him, and be in love with him, and she said no way, but then: kinda. And then they took her baby away, because it wasn't really her baby, which explains why the Gods were so quiet on the subject of her. Gaeta was the administration mole for the Resistance, which

even a dull child should have been able to put together, but Chief had a lobotomy I think during our year in Baltar's hair. Chief's lobotomy explains everything, come to think of it. Also previously, Baltar signed off on the execution of 200 detainees that had been taken from their homes in the middle of the night by the SS. This was so bad that even he had to admit he'd fucked up, but what's interesting is that he still thinks it's the only bad thing he ever did. One of those marked for death was Cally, Chief's wife (lobotomy!), so the entire population of New Caprica mobilized on her behalf and, as an added but negligible bonus, saved Laura Roslin and Tom Zarek into the bargain. One of mobilized citizens who participated in the daring rescue of Cally was Jammer, who was in the SS, but not in a bad way. Just because he was stupid. Then Anders and Tigh were agreed that Tigh should poison his wife, and it was very sad, but she tacitly agreed too. Then Lee and his dad saved everybody from New Caprica -- only it is going to turn out that that is not true -- except for Baltar, who ran off with Cylons after literally handing Hera over to Three.

Now: a group of six shadowy enforcers shove a prisoner into a Viper launch bay, with a bag over his head. So it's going to be a knee-slapper, I take it. ("Mom! Hilarious Battlestar again?!") Oh, look, it's Jammer, Crewman James Lyman. On his knees, choking on his own spit and crying. This is the Circle: From Galactica, Saul Tigh, Chief Galen Tyrol (lobotomy!), and Deck Specialist Seelix; from the Original Caprica Resistance, fighters Samuel Anders, Charlie Connor, and Jean Barclay. Six people from the ground; six people who've been running just like everyone, but now also caged. "Evidence for the following charges have been presented to the Circle," says Seelix, the Circle's voice. "You carried arms for the enemy as you carried out multiple raids against the human population, and that during one raid, 23 people were killed by you and your men during the assault on the temple of Artemis." Jammer screams that it's not true ([it was the temple massacre that indirectly drove him to the SS in the first place](#)) but they're not listening. "These are the names of the people killed by you and those under your command," Connor says, forcing his head up. "You look at those names!" Seelix chills Connor out with a word, and continues: "The Circle has examined the evidence and found you guilty of treason and crimes against humanity. Do you have anything to say before sentence is

passed?" Jammer -- beautiful and confused and childlike as ever -- protests that he was just trying to help people. "You didn't do a very good job, then, did you?" grits out Tigh, and Anders just wants to get it over with. Get what over with? The murder. The murder they're about to commit.

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Jammer jerks his head to Chief, his old boss. "I helped people. I helped lots of people...Chief -- Chief! Chief, I helped Cally. I saved Cally. I saved Cally." He flashes back to the [heroic saving of Cally](#) and stumbles over his words. "I'm the one who let her go when they were gonna shoot her. I took her out of line and I said, 'Go! Run right now!' And she did. She ran and she got away, because of me, Chief. I helped Cally. I saved Cally." He doesn't make sense when he talks anymore. Just words. Chief's like, "Yeah, she did somehow get away from the band of secret police and huge chrome robots with guns for hands, didn't she?" But then he loses the train of thought (lobotomy!) and Connor jumps into the gap: "They killed 23 people during the Temple raids! Twelve men, eight women, and three children. Children! My son is on this list. His name is right there. And that frackin' son of a bitch put him there. So saving Cally -- if that happened -- does that make up for killing my son?" That wouldn't make up for selling your son, dude.

Tigh's like, answer the question, Chief. But like, what's he going to say? It's rhetorical and stupid. Chief crouches with Jammer, his old subordinate, whom he's known forever, and shows him the list. "Did you kill these people?" (Maybe there were a lot of Temple massacres and this is a different one? I'm confused.) "Answer me," he whispers, and Jammer talks crazy some more about how it was nuts on the surface: "You make these decisions so fast. You're making an arrest, and people come out with their hands up. But sometimes it's just a trick. They tell you they're surrendering and then they open fire. We thought they were insurgents. It wasn't till after we saw the bodies. What was I supposed to do?" Chief crumples the list and stands up again, addressing the Circle. Does saving Cally make up for it? "No, it doesn't." Seelix continues, "Under the Articles, the punishment for treason is death. Sentence confirmed and carried out on this, the third day of the second Exodus." Jammer whispers, "Oh, Chief," and screams, "I'm sorry!" Anders just wants to get it over with. Get what over with?



The Circle leaves Jammer, James Lyman, Captain of the disbanded New Caprica Police, kneeling on the floor of the launch tube. The airlock closes behind them. He screams, panics, rushes the glass, stares at them on the other side. Pleads. He is beautiful. They can't even hear him. Connor hits the launch tube door, and Jammer is sucked out into space. Connor croaks, "My son. Kevin. He was only seven years old." Barclay comforts him -- they've all been together since the first holocaust, stuck on Caprica together. "Connor, let's go." She leads him away. Anders is hurting. "This isn't what I signed up for." But I guess it's not hurting him enough yet.

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In the refugee barracks on Galactica, looks like, the Chief joins his wife, who starts awake. "Am I on watch?" No. Chief takes the baby and looks down at his wife. "Cally? When you were down on their planet, you ran away from the trucks. Did anybody help you? One of the NCP goons or...anybody?" She shakes her head. "What? No." (Whatever, bitch. I don't have anything to say about that, beyond this: are lobotomies contagious? You don't remember that there was a guy in a ski mask who cut off your handcuffs and told you to run, moments before you were shot by giant robots? That part is a little fucking fuzzy for you? How about the fact that you've known Jammer forever, and that no ski mask is so incredibly deceitful that you wouldn't realize it was Jammer? This isn't even Cally-bashing right now: I'm legitimately confused. Because either the acting is fracked or the script is, and with Cally that's always the question, isn't it. So I don't know. Either Cally's making a choice here, a really ugly and petty and resentful one -- which: wouldn't that be something? -- or the actor thinks that Cally's just sleepy and confused about shit, which...makes no sense. Or else I've been right all along, and Cally actually is just a high-functioning mentally retarded adult, which means Chief got a retard pregnant, and also that he hits retards. And I'm not totally enjoying Chief right now, but that is way harsh.)

"... Wait. Yeah. Somebody told me to run. It probably was one of those goons. I haven't thought about it since." See, I think that she's doing this on purpose, but then it is so not involved in the acting at all. Where was the director this day? Did he understand the script at all? Did anybody on set have any thoughts at all on

this bullshit? "... Hey, how did you know about that?" Which, again: these are the words of a woman with an agenda, but she's saying it like she's just so yawny and sleepy and doesn't want to deal with this. "I mean, why do you ask?" I'm going to have to go with poor acting choices this round. I hate to say it, but there it is: it's disheartening, in that I have no grudge against the actor, but also because that means the writers want her to be even more sneaky and classless and small and mean than the actor is capable of dealing with. Gross. Chief's like, nothing, never mind. "Go back to sleep." She's like, "Okay," and then she...rolls over and just goes to sleep like nothing happened, except something obviously happened. I cannot fucking deal with her.

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Credits. 41,435 souls in the Fleet. Also Sharon Agathon and Cally Henderson Tyrol, who are up in the fucking air right now. By comparison, the population of the Fleet at the time of New Caprica's settlement was 49,550. Between the unsanitary and refugee year down there in Baltar's hair, and the corresponding four months of torture and execution under the occupation, we've lost...over eight thousand people. That's not even taking into account the baby boom down on New Caprica. That's so awful.

Colonial One, where Adama and Tigh and Roslin are all agreeing that nothing that happened was somebody's fault: it was an impossible situation. Tigh says he would have probably done the same, in somebody's position. Roslin isn't entirely sold, but she shakes somebody's hand: "No hard feelings?" It's Gaius Baltar! Who is clearly having a drug-related psychotic break! "None. Mistakes were made. No doubt, there's no question. But the past is the past. I think we can all agree that we'd like to move on." Chip Six appears, railing at them: "You fools, you're being too lenient! He betrayed you. Actively sought your deaths. Doesn't that matter to you? Don't you have any self-respect?" Gaius reminds her, smirking, that nobody can hear her. "Don't make me angry, Gaius," she grits, and Adama looks at him: "You wouldn't like her when she's angry." (Man, I finally saw The Hulk movie. That was like having a drug-related psychotic break, but at least it wasn't horribly fucking offensive and disappointing in the last two minutes like Haute Tension, because it wasn't that great at any point.) Wait, what happened? Is this is a dream? Adama and Six are in cahoots? Of course they are: daddy and mommy. I also

like the note that Tigh would have done the same, like he's some kind of fucking moral high bar. Wish fulfillment is so fucking creepy. Cf. this shit right here: "I've always wanted you," says Roslin, taking off his glasses. Even Gaius knows that's viciously unlikely, and gets sad again. "Oh, no. I'm dreaming, aren't I?" She smiles and leans in. "Yes, you are." And she kisses the hell out of him. (Roslin finally gets some play, but it's with Gaius and it's a nasty dream sequence. Everything you want, in the worst possible way.) Gaius jerks awake on a basestar. The reason we know it's a basestar room, though we've never seen them, is because it is AWESOME-looking. Chrome room, red band around the walls, pulsing, and bright lights everywhere. Gaius is naked in this room, and his bathrobe is hanging on the wall. His bed is...baroque, to say the least. It's an overstuffed purple fainting couch in a bright white room. A Centurion watches him dress, and they stare at each other. I bet if you sleep in that bed you dream all the dreams of all the hookers that ever owned it.

Anders and Starbuck hang in the Pilots' barracks (I guess, except why is Anders there? Is he a nugget?) and he asks her -- as though he wouldn't know -- if she managed to get any sleep. "Sleep when you're dead," she grunts, as they dress. "Got my gear out of storage. Never thought I'd see any of this stuff again." He leans in to kiss her and she stops him. "Just don't, okay?" Another Pilot passes between them, and it's broken. That easy.

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On the real Colonial One, Roslin's meeting with Zarek. (How awesome if she got some play right now, except there's no way to edit it that the sexless fanboys wouldn't be like, "Apparently this episode is about how Laura Roslin is a whore." Just like with the miniseries.) They discuss the new Quorum of Twelve, which will be sworn in in three days, and Zarek exposit how as President, he'll nominate her as VP, they'll confirm her, and then he'll resign. "The whole thing should take less than an hour." I was going to say she should pay, and learn a little something about consequences, but then I think about the last year and it just feels nasty to say. Tacky. She'll fuck up gloriously in no time, I'm sure, but I don't really feel like she needs to earn this. "You're stepping down without a fight? Means Tom Zarek wants something. So why don't you put your cards on the table and let's see if it's a price that I'm willing to pay." (He's like, "The price is

that hot ass!" and then they make out... In five, four, come on, three... Nope, not happening. Why won't this ring grant my wishes anymore?) Zarek calls himself a realist -- because one thing activists and terrorists are willing to accept is political reality -- and admits he knew he wouldn't be in office long one way or the other. "And the Admiral's made it quite clear that he'd like nothing better than to put me in a cell if I try to hang on to power." Roslin calls this Tigh-style coup "a favor," since it's Bill and not Saul, and explains how her brain worked that out: "You and I both know how impossible it would be to govern this Fleet without the backing of the military." Um. If the government isn't backed by its military, you have what's called South America. It goes poorly. I want Laura to be President again, because I fear change, but like: man up, Bill. You could play with Tom too. "Even so, I want to be included in the new government. I don't wanna be on the outside looking in anymore." Maybe Tom can learn something about politics after all. "Okay, okay. You stood up to Baltar on New Caprica, you nearly lost your life for your trouble. This Fleet needs that kind of courage. The vice presidency is yours if you want it, Tom." They shake hands, laughing. He's going to fuck this up, watch.

Galactica CIC: sparks still flying, but this time it's because of a soldering gun and not being shot all over the place and nearly killed. Gaeta enters in civvies and Tigh is on him with a quickness. "You gotta be kidding! Who gave this man permission to enter the CIC?" Helo tells him it was Adama: "Communications took some serious hits during the rescue, and Mr. Gaeta's offered to help with the repairs." Tigh freaks out about how Gaeta is a turncoat and collaborator and contributed to the deaths of thousands, but yet: "The old man needs his phones fixed, and suddenly, all is forgiven." Helo tries to do his Helo thing: "Cylons find us, we're gonna need every hand we've got." Tigh's like, they totally did already? "The Cylons found us, Mr. Agathon." (Watch very carefully whenever a New Caprican interacts with somebody who stayed with the Fleet during the occupation. I have this feeling that the whole conflict is going to be central, like maybe civil war central, and sooner rather than later. I don't blame them, though: the New Caprica survivors have like no sense of humor about anything.) "Your friend Gaeta was on the welcoming committee." He gets right the hell in Gaeta's face: "Hey! Look at me. Long as you're here, maybe you can help me out. I'm missing

something. I lost it in detention. Since you're so buddy-buddy with the Cylons, maybe you know where it is? How 'bout it?" There's spit coming out. "Do you know where my eye is?" Damn. Adama comes in shouting Saul's name, and he barks orders at the crew before dragging Saul off for a little talk. Saul stumbles. It wasn't just his eye they took, and worse: they didn't make him cut out his own eye. It was the resistance that did that.

"They have a lot of work in the next couple of weeks. I need you to get some sleep. Get rested and get ready, all right?" Tigh tells him he's fine, and screams back into CIC: "And you can tell that toaster-lover over there that I am still the XO of this ship!" Adama realizes it's not getting better without coffee and a shower, and lays hands on his friend. "Let's go." Tigh struggles, and Bill's finally like, "You're embarrassing yourself, Saul." That's the Tigh I'm used to! "You're the one that should be embarrassed. Letting one of Baltar's henchman walk around like nothing's happened..." Adama officially orders him to go sleep it off, and Tigh gets poetic again: "Oh, yeah. Just go to sleep. Forget about it all, just forget about everything. Well, I'm not forgetting. I'm not gonna forget." Tigh slumps off for another drink or something, and Gaeta is very damned sad. (I kind of feel like, collaborator or not, Gaeta's still got some moral cred for the time he stopped Tigh from stealing the election, you know? Although that went not so well.)

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The Circle. "The charges are carrying arms for the enemy in a time of war, shooting three civilians, and collaboration with the enemy. I call the vote." They vote unanimously to murder her: a lady named Chadwick, currently aboard the Monarch. Barclay tells them she'll take care of it with her people there. Anders asks if anybody has a cigarette -- because when you've spent a year soaking up rads in a nuclear strike zone, what you should do is throw the finger at cancer -- and Chief asks how many more they've got to get through. Fifty-seven, Barclay confirms. Fifty-seven secret trials, and only three days to get them done. "We all knew there was a clock when we signed on," says Tigh roughly, which means there's something not connecting here. There's official sanction from somewhere, with three days to work with...God-DAMN it, Tom Zarek. You moron! This is worse than the black market! "Most of these fracks are so guilty they stink,"

spits Connor. "I could get through 50 of these things in an hour." Um, cool? Tigh slams his head into the table, drawing very fine, very specific lines around the morality of this. "You think we're a bunch of thugs [yes] handing out punishment on a whim [totally]? Jammer didn't get airlocked because you thought he was guilty [actually he was, or else you'd be doing this in public]. There was evidence. He was tried and convicted by this Circle [and not a government body]. This is about justice. You got that? Justice!" Nope, nope, nope. This is vigilantism. Which doesn't really bother me, but it goes back to the robot rape debate, which is: why are you doing it? Are you doing it to preserve the safety of the Fleet somehow? To punish your enemies? Or are you doing it because somebody else entirely took your eyeball, your wife, your loved ones? Revenge isn't justice no matter how many times you say it. I like Tigh, but this time he's wrong. There are systems in place. There is a government and elected body of officials, there are courts and courts martial. This is personal, and that's guns in the Temple. Connor, shaken, is like, okay, dude. Tigh apologizes, saying he likes Connor and Connor's a good guy, and then calls the next case. Seelix: "Felix Gaeta. Charges are collaborating with the enemy and crimes against humanity." Chief's face gets worried; everybody stares at everybody else.

"I don't wanna do this. Do you think I like it? I stood beside Gaeta in the CIC for almost four years," Tigh says. "He was like family. But the fact remains he was chief of staff to Gaius Baltar. And that alone is enough to convict him." How so? Anders says they have zero hard evidence on Gaeta: "No witnesses -- nothing. All we do know is that he worked for Baltar. That's it." But Sam, didn't you just hear Tigh make up new laws about how that's enough to convict him? Just now this very second? Chief balks too: "We need something specific." Tigh goes, "You want specific?" And then takes a long time getting there, claiming that Baltar wasn't in charge of anything in particular, that Gaeta was totally the brains and ran the government. "Everyone knew that," Tigh says. "He ran the operation." Which is totally true, except for how you have to trade the name "Gaeta" for "the Cylons." Which "everybody" also knows, and which has the advantage of being true. "He did the paperwork. He approved the death lists," Tigh says. Chief asks how he can know that. "Did you see him approve one single death list?" Tigh produces a distribution list with Cally's name on it and also Gaeta's. I don't know where that came



from, unless it's a cc: situation, because I remember quite clearly the day that Gaeta saw this particular list, and wigged out. I think there's something I don't get here, because the facts aren't lining up. Anders says whatever it says, it's still circumstantial. "We don't know what Gaeta did or didn't do when he saw that list." (Throw a wild hissy, is what he did.) Barclay sides with the crazies, surprising Anders. "No, Sam. You see a death list like that, you know innocent people are gonna die, and you do nothing about it? He's guilty." Connor calls the question. Seelix: "The question of the innocence or guilt of Felix Gaeta has been called. The Circle will vote. I vote guilty." Connor and Tigh and Barclay vote guilty. Anders gets up to leave: "Don't bother. I'm done." Seelix is like, "We're voting," but Anders clarifies that he's done with the Circle. "War's over for me, I'm sorry." Neat. I like Sam. Connor waves it off and tries to get back to the vote. "Still four to none, Chief... " and then Jean Barclay steps in, protesting that they need six votes. Conner's not feeling it, but Chief sides with her. "No, screw you! We're a jury. That's how it was set up. We need six votes. We don't have six votes, I'm out too." Tigh agrees. But besides the people that weren't radicalized enough by the occupation and mistreatment itself, and the people who were up in the Fleet the whole time, who's a cast regular that's fucked up enough and angry enough and got hurt enough down there to...oh.

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Meanwhile, Raiders are swarming around Gaius's basestar, and inside a Centurion steps out of the room with all the deference a nine-foot chrome CGI robot can muster, to allow Three to enter. In a white Marilyn dress, looking FLY. "How are you, Gaius?" Still alive, he grumps. She grins secretively and hands him some pills, then sits down near him on the whore couch. He stands up pissily. "You'll have to excuse me, I'm slightly confused. How long have I been here exactly?" Three days. "So it's taken you three days to remember where I was?" As he takes the pills, Three tries to explain. "No one's forgotten you, Gaius. It's just there's been some controversy about whether or not you should've been let on board or not." He hisses that his value is unquestionable, and she writhes on his couch awesomely: "There'll always be a question. You are a human." Gaius falls into his usual trap of thinking he has a pot to piss in. "Now look, I helped you! I gave you Sharon's child." Three's like, word -- and thanks -- but also what I just said.

"The child's rescue did weigh in your favor." (Briefly: that word "rescue" just clicked. The kid's half-Cylon. You tell me the moral difference between Laura Roslin kidnapping Hera and hiding her on New Caprica, and what Three's done here. Just because A is an asshole doesn't mean B is blameless, and I'm seeing a lot of that around these parts lately.) "However, the vote's deadlocked. Three in favor of your being allowed to stay, and three against. With one model still undecided." She practically winks at him, inappropriately: "The fact is, the decision rests with the Sixes." She watches for his reaction, which is decidedly: vomit-y.

Lee brings reports of "missing persons" to Adama's office, where Adama suddenly and spontaneously exposit all over everything that we apparently "left thousands of people on that planet." (Thousands? Really? In a rescue op coordinated by Tory Foster? Doubtful. Maybe "left" as in buried, but not thousands stranded. The whole point of the rescue was that Adama was like, "I'm not going to do that a fifteenth time. I have already left huge batches of humanity to their doom sixty-seven times today. This eighty-ninth time, I cannot do it.") Lee explains, this is people who specifically were survivors but have disappeared since the Second Exodus. "Jammer, for instance." Adama says he saw him as latterly as yesterday afternoon. "Yeah, but he didn't report at muster this morning, bed check negative, sickbay negative. It's like he just vanished." Total of 13, two on Galactica and 11 elsewhere in the Fleet: "Every one of them confirmed as a survivor by multiple witnesses and then poof! Gone." (Adama's like, "Oh my God, have we located Cally?" and he grabs his gun and Lee has to tackle him before he gets on the damn phone himself if that's what it takes.) Adama tells him to keep him posted, and Lee runs off: "I have a date with a jump rope." (Come! On! She's not that bad! I actually really like her this season! ... What? Oh, right. Just another intro to a fat joke. Sorry.) Bill stares at his fat-ass son and Lee gets defensive, making up a whole new system of weights and measures: "Hey, I've dropped half a stone!" Adama tells him to keep jumping, and Lee manages to leave without telling him to go to hell.

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Starbuck watches Gaeta in the Galactica Mess. He's, needless to say, sitting alone. Like, pretending to do comms, or maybe administrating the sugar packets or something. She approaches

and sits, genuinely friendly. "Hey. How ya doing?" He's grateful, and, as one does, asks her in response how she is doing. Which is his first mistake, although you wouldn't know it. "I'm good," she says guardedly. And you need a PhD in Starbuck to understand why this would be the fucking point you walk away. "Why do you ask?" she says, which is a CODE RED. "Well," he stupidly continues, "I heard about your situation. You were..." CODE BLACK. She'll have his ass for this. "... Right," she says breezily, and thinks about his eyes. "I just try not to think about it anymore. You know?" She eats and looks back at him. It's a different girl in there now. "Kinda like you. Sitting in your plushy little office on Colonial One doing all of Baltar's dirty work for him. Probably never even thought about what was happening to me, right?" The hidden command: Do not even think about what was happening to me. Don't mention it, don't look at it, don't witness it. "I didn't know about your situation. If I had, I would've tried to get you out." Get your own ass out! Now! You are begging for it! She hums at him, tight-lipped. She folds herself up like origami in a new shape she's never had before. "Like I've just said about 50 times now, I was serving the legal President of the Colonies. We all elected him, remember?" The mess starts to clear out. I mean to say that the ambient heat coming off this table is such that even the stupidest crewman is getting the vibe. "So that's supposed to excuse it?" Gaeta exhales. "What do you want me to say? Maybe I could've done more. But I thought that when the Cylons landed, it was important for me to keep my job. To help from the inside." Starbuck offers a reinterpretation of that story, mainly that his job was "propping Baltar up and letting the Cylons walk all over us." Gaeta protests, talks about the dead drops and Jake the dog and the Cylon positions and all the memos, and she couldn't care less. "Hooray, Felix. You're a frackin' hero." Gaeta stares at her and leaves, realizing there's no way out of this one. She stares and watches him go; in the corner is Seelix, watching. Watching them both. Weighing the votes. Stacking the deck. Making a choice. ("Dude, why does Jacob hate Seelix so much? Cavil's a dick!" This is why, this right here: She'd co-opt Kara's extended abuse trauma to take "revenge" on somebody that never hurt her. Leaving Cavil in the dirt without even suicide as an option was just a pointer to the fact that eventually we'd end up here, now.)

Also: Never duplicate your act breaks. (Hey, [Espenson](#).) You can't

cut to commercial with the poundy drums going "oh girl what about Gaeta" the whole time, because A) it's already clear he's going to be fine, because this character is necessary to the spectrum of response to occupation in the ongoing story, but B) it just underlines that fact if you keep screaming at me about it. Not that the scintillating conversation about jump-roping would really work for an act out, but it would have been more balanced, in terms of the show moving forward, to have this next scene before the break, and then lead from Seelix in the mess to the next meeting of the Circle, to see what she was thinking. If you put a Baltar scene for the act out, it tells you we're going to spend a lot of time on the basestar, and if it's a Baltar/Six breakup scene, it lends weight to his entire story, which he kind of needs at this point.

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Anyway, that was just particularly glaring just now. Basestar. Baltar wakes and his eyes slowly clear, revealing a Six staring sadly down at him. Caprica. "Whatever feelings I had for you have to stop. I allowed my feelings to cloud my judgment. I protected you. I gave your species a second chance. I even turned against a sister Cylon, and for what? I'm Cylon, Gaius. Somehow I lost sight of that." He stands up and stares at her. "You are much, much more than a machine. You're a person. A real person. A woman. And you're in love with me. And it hurts. I know it hurts." He starts crying. This is weird. Too many resonances with Gina and POW stuff that I don't think is intended. Too much begging, whereas we know the second she dumps him, Chip Gaius is going to start smarming around and pouring her martinis again. That was awesome. "But believe me, I am the only one that can make it better. Don't you see? I am the only one." So...does he actually think she's Gina? That's Gina talk. It perverts the entire Gina thing, actually. Which you'd think would be hard. "No, this has to end," says Caprica, and walks to the door. But here's the thing: she's the swing vote. If Caprica joins the Sixes, and the Sixes vote against the Eights (I'm guessing) and Threes, that's 4-3 against, and he's dead. Spaced. So at some point during his girly screaming, it stops being about love and starts being about survival. (Which, explain the difference to a narcissist; I doubt he knows how fast his mind is working right now.) "You need me. You need me! Admit it! Admit that you need me." He tries to follow her out, and Centurions block his door.

And the argument shifts again, this time to fear and something you might mistake for love: "And I need you too! Did you hear me? I need you too." He turns back to his room and mumbles to himself: "Maybe I should've started with that." Oh, Gaius. Oh, boys.

Circle. "It's a jury," Tigh explains to the new member. "I wanna make that clear. It's not about settling scores or personal grudges. It's a jury." Chief continues: "We're just dealing with the worst of the worst. People that did more than put on an NCP uniform or make a deal with the Cylons." (That is the darkest humor ever: "We killed Ellen and Jammer the other day, as a warm-up, but now we're going after the real bad guys." That's intentional and brilliant, wording it that way.) "They're the killers," crazies Barclay all over the place. "The real traitors." Starbuck is like, but none of this is legal, right? Not that she'd have a problem with it, at all -- that's clear -- but she's getting her footing. "No, no," Chief insists. "It's legal." (LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLlobotomy!) Seelix hands over the "death order" that Gaeta apparently invented, dictated to himself, typed up for himself, signed off as a notary public, and then carried out. On the people that are still alive. "You gotta be kidding me!" Kara snorts, and they have her. Just like that. Using Kara's captivity, which clearly they're all aware she was detained and not in the usual way, is worse than guns in the Temple. Girlfriend is unhinged. They don't any of them get a pass on this one. Gross me the fuck out.

"That's why we need to know right now," says Tigh. "Are you in or out?" She clears her throat. "In." He lets her study the kangaroo evidence before kangaroo court comes back into kangaroo session, but Kara's stuck on the huge lie part they all want so desperately to believe: "You telling me that Gaeta saw this list and didn't do a damn thing about it?" Yes, even though it's a fantasy. Well, not "telling" exactly, more like "presenting you with circumstantial evidence and hoping you see red." "We have no idea of knowing what Gaeta did or did not do when he saw the list," Chief says hurriedly, because this is totally totally legal and a really good idea except for how his stupid wife managed to just remember that he murdered Jammer the other day, but other than that it's all rules and regs from here on out. Lobotomy! ("In other words," Cavil explains -- and it's a good explanation for something that's always confused me, complete with air-quotes -- "they're worried what 'God' might think if they commit murder:

they're covering their existential asses." Speaking of this very death order, and all.)

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Kara immediately votes, on seeing the "evidence," and breathes convincingly about "my Gods, the whole thing's like a bad dream only we woke up and the traitors are all still here" and that shit. She's just as culpable as them. In some ways more, because at least she knows she's suffering from violent PTSD right now, and she just doesn't care. Seelix asks for Chief's vote, but Anders interrupts. Tigh tells him to get lost, but he demands to speak to his wife. Tigh rolls his eye at her. "We already have your vote. Take a break."

Out in the corridor, Anders is worried: "I quit because I'm not looking for ways to keep killing people." She shakes her head. "I need this, Sam." Ouch. That is so fucked. "So...what, throwing a few people out an airlock is gonna make you feel better about yourself? 'Cause believe me, those aren't the people that kept you locked in that room." And she says the words I was really afraid about: "They'll do." She says they will pay, not just for her and her pain, but for every single other person "we left back on that planet" (?), because "someone has gotta pay." She tells him to either get with it, or get lost. "Is that what you want, Kara? You want me to leave?"

Back inside, Tigh is needling Chief: "He doesn't wanna say he's guilty because Gaeta is such a good guy. Right, Chief? Everyone likes Gaeta, so let's let him off the hook. Let's just look the other way on this one. [Heh.] Well, a lot of good people had to pay the price for what they did; choices they made on New Caprica. Like my wife." Everybody stares at him, shocked. Interesting. That really was just a deal between Anders and Tigh, to protect the Resistance and the second Exodus. This hurts. "That's right. Ellen collaborated, gave the Cylons information on the Resistance, and she died for it. Because that's the price of collaborating with the enemy. And I liked her a lot more than I like Gaeta." (Me too, frankly; not that I dislike Gaeta but he's kind of boring, and Ellen...was not.) That's so hard! I'm glad he said it out loud, though. I mean, they should know. He's like a crash course in being for real for real.



Out in the hall, Katee Sackhoff is the glorious queen of the entire planet of acting as Kara tries to explain to her husband that she has lost her entire mind. "Look, Sam. I'm in a different place now. I -- I don't know how else to explain it to you. But I got out of that cell, and it's like someone painted the world in different colors. And I look at you, and I want to tear your eyes out just for looking at me." He shakes his head, crying. They met on the Farm, you know? He knows what that means. What she's saying. That you get punished for witnessing somebody else's weakness. (She's turning into her mother.) "I just wanna...hurt someone, and it might as well be you. So you should probably go before that happens." Are you kidding me with this? My stomach just flipped over at that one and I've seen the episode like three times.

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Seelix is after blood: "Baltar signed death warrants, organized murder squads. He collaborated with the enemy from day one." Chief reminds her whose mockery of a trial this is, and Tigh doesn't see a "Godsdamned" difference between Gaeta and Gaius. "He's right," says Seelix. "A lot of people died because of them, Chief." Chief snaps shut. "Fine. Guilty."

Samuel Anders holds out his wife's dog tag. The ones she [gave him on Old Caprica](#), as a promise. A ridiculous, impossible promise that came true. "Remember this? I don't want this anymore." He walks away and she says his name softly. He comes back, and she kisses him tenderly goodbye. As fucked up as this is, I'm kinda proud of her. I don't know how bad it got during the year on New Caprica, with her and Lee, but I do know what we have seen between them, and face it, "Let's both get out of this before I tear your eyes out" is a huge, huge step for her to make, compared to hate-fucking and the usual stuff. She slept with Gaius Baltar, for Christ's sake. Let's give her a little credit. So this kiss goodbye ends up sweet, even though it's a PTSD case getting a divorce so she won't kill her husband, right before she heads into her secret cabal where they hand out secret death sentences based on little to no evidence. (Compare to Ellen and Saul when she died; same vibe.) She leaves him standing in the corridor, illuminated, and goes back to the darkness of the Circle.

Later, Seelix and Connor march Gaeta -- head in a bag -- to a launch bay. "Turn around! On your knees. On your knees!"

screams Connor, and rips tape off his mouth. "Felix Gaeta, you've been tried and found guilty of crimes against humanity by a circle of your peers, as duly authorized by the President of the Colonies." And that's how Seelix kicks it to commercial. For the third time running.

"If you have any words to offer in your own defense, now is the time." Chief begs him to speak, and Connor "begs" him to speak, nastily asking to hear the story about how "hiding behind Baltar's skirt" was actually Gaeta's way of "helping the insurgency." Barclay orders him to say something, and he grits his teeth and shows them what insurgency actually looks like. "What's the point? I already tried to explain it. I'm not gonna beg." Tigh tells him it's too bad he didn't "grow that spine four months ago," unnecessary, and he stares up at them. Seelix and Barclay turn away. Kara...does not: "Beg." She begins to kick him. "Beg! Beg! Beg!"

Felix Gaeta sat up there in Colonial One and didn't save her. Twenty-four hours a day, the only thing we know for sure is that he didn't save her. It's the one thing he did constantly for four months. And that's not really the problem here, because Kara Thrace's mother was a bad woman, and she hurt people smaller than herself. And Kara grew up and was so hard, and so fast, and so strong, and such a good Pilot and such a good shot that nobody could ever make her feel small again. And then somebody came along that was harder and faster and stronger than her, and she learned what it was like to be small again. Powerless. And they gave her a little Kacey, that looked just like her, as a little girl, and she told Kacey she was sorry, and that she loved her, and that she would always protect her. That she wouldn't betray things or hurt people just because they were smaller than herself. And then they took Kacey away too, and she remembered that she was always going to be smaller than somebody. And now Gaeta's on his knees, refusing to beg. So he needs to be smaller.

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"Beg! Beg! Beg!" Tigh tries to stop her: "Thrace," but she shrugs him off. "No! Beg. Come on, Felix. Tell 'em how you were actually working for the Resistance the entire time. Come on! Tell 'em all about the important information that you were giving up. Tell 'em

about all the messages, and the dog bowl, and everything else. Just tell me about... " Chief pulls her off, finally. "What did she just say? What did you say to her? Tell me. What did you say to her?" Gaeta shrugs. "There was a yellow dog bowl. It was a signal. It meant there was a message in the garbage dump. I turned it over. It was a signal. And then there was a message in the garbage dump." Chief whips out a box cutter, praying to the Gods. Tigh's astonished, Kara's sickened. "You were wondering who the source was, Colonel. There's no other way he could've known. He's the only other one that would know about it. He's the reason we know about the death lists. He's the reason I saved Cally." (Aw, man. She's getting credit for this shit?) "He's the reason we're on this ship. He's the one who gave us the inside information. There's our source, Colonel." Gaeta stands. "I did what I could. I don't know what else I could've done." What you could is the exact same amount anybody else ever gave. Don't stress out. He leaves, they go fuck themselves. Kara takes off pissed, and the rest of the Circle just kind of disintegrate.

In Colonial One, Adama demands to know what the hell the Circle was about. "It's all perfectly legal," explains Zarek. "You'll find a signed executive order on file authorizing a secret jury of six men and women to try, sentence, and execute people guilty of extraordinary crimes while collaborating with the enemy in a time of war. There's also a death warrant with my signature for every conviction." Adama calls an end to Zarek's presidency with a quickness. "Your presidency is a farce." Roslin makes an appeal to Zarek's sense of fairness and democracy, reminding him of due process and the right to a jury trial. (It would be so weird if this were about Gitmo, Iraq, Afghanistan, a thousand other atrocities. Wouldn't that just be so weird?) "They have a jury. But they don't get lawyers. They don't get to showboat for weeks and months on end. They don't get to blame the system and they don't get lasting fame as martyrs or innocent people just in the wrong place at the wrong time. They just disappear." That's so beautiful I just voted Republican in my boxers.

"Now," Zarek continues, "in the gray twilight between the long night of the Occupation and the dawn of a new era, you come into office clean, without their blood on your hands." Which is...um, compelling. I'm so confused now. Are secret trials and war crimes like Zarek's version of flirting? That is so hot. "That's very poetic," Roslin stutters. "However." (Here we go! I love the

Roslin "however" marker.) "You have a problem, Mr. President. Everyone by law is entitled to a trial with representation. Everyone. It is not an option to be discarded at the president's whim." He asks if she's honestly thinking she'll get justice by going public. "Come on, Laura. You're not that naive. Let me tell you what's gonna happen if these cases go to trial. It'll consume this Fleet for months, maybe years. People will be lining up to testify against their neighbors. It'll be a circus -- an entertainment for the mob. And you'll be signing death warrants almost every day. Is that how you wanna spend your next term, Laura? As executioner-in-chief?" She smiles sadly and turns away, totally grossed out, caged in, boxed up. He's right.

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A crazy-looking priest swears Roslin in, aboard Colonial One. How many times has she become president? It seems like a whole lot. She shakes the Priest's hand and turns to the press. "Thank you. Thank you all, for once again entrusting me with this high office of civil service. Today's a new beginning for all of us. We share a unique destiny" -- cut, of course, to Starbuck at her locker, hanging her dogtags inside. Next to Zak's ring -- "that our future is ours to shape, and our past cannot be forgotten. A new day requires new thinking. And while I had intended on using this occasion as an opportunity to announce a formation of a special prosecutor's office charged with investigating acts of collaboration with the enemy" -- Tigh settles into his quarters, remembering Ellen -- "I have decided instead that a different gesture is called for on this, the first day of my next term as your president." Zarek, in the audience. "We all feel the need for justice, and we all feel the need for vengeance." Zarek looks down at this. "And telling the difference between the two can be difficult at times. We are all victims of the Cylons." On the basestar, Gaius watches sadly as Caprica leaves a suit of clothes in his room.

"None of us can be impartial. I certainly can't. So today I am forming [a commission on truth and reconciliation](#) to hear our stories, and record them for posterity. There will be no prosecutions." Felix enters the CIC officer's locker room and puts his stuff back; hangs his tags. "I am issuing a general pardon for every human being in this Fleet." I started crying like WHOA right there. I'm a sucker for big forgiveness. God is the last thirty

seconds of Fight Club. What do you do when you can't get out? Turn into something else. "This will not be a popular move today. But I truly believe that this is the only way for us to move forward in strength in a spirit of healing and reconciliation." Tory gazes at her in a spirit of healing and reconciliation and, some posters believe, hot-blooded lust. I don't think so; I think that she was so upset last week because she's been part of Hera's life exactly as long, and exactly as deep, as either Maya or Laura herself, and that's huge. "I thank you for your continued patience and courage. Good day." Adama begins to clap, giving the military okay, and everybody follows suit. And in the mess hall, Chief enters and is offered a seat at a table, but joins Gaeta instead. Gaeta looks at him, thinks for a second, and goes back to eating. General amnesty for everybody. I bet next week is going to be twice as horrible, just to make up for the nice feelings we're having right now.

# THE GIRL WITH HER HAND IN A LION'S MOUTH

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 6 | Aired on 11.02.2006

*Torn (1)* - The Cylons and humans simultaneously locate the next step toward Earth, but a mysterious virus left behind by the Thirteenth Tribe may prove to be the end of the [Cylon race](#) for good. Also: Cylon basestars are ten times weirder than you might assume, Kara might be getting her soul back, and Saul Tigh is on the serious outs.

**Recaplet:** Two-parters are the new FIFTEEN MINUTES BEFORE JANUARY LAST WEEK. Not that I'm complaining, because this season freakin' rocks. After Starbuck risks her Viper acting like an ass, CAG Apollo grounds her. Meanwhile, Tigh has been both officially and unofficially replaced by Helo as XO and Adama's BFF. Kacey and her mom (whose name sounded like Julia Prynne, okay) come looking for Kacey's "friend" Kara, and get turned away just like Sam last week, and it is heartbreaking. On the other hand, Saul's crazy now involves hallucinations of Ellen.

Tigh and Starbuck spend the entire episode in the mess hall alienating everybody and trying to start that civil war between the New Capricans and the Fleet crew that I thought was going to boil so subtly for a while longer. Adama finally summons them to a hardcore glaring session in which he orders them to either shoot him in the head or stop fracking around. Even after being demoted from "daughter" to "cancer" (and that's not a metaphor, he literally says those words out loud) Kara seems redeemable, if by an infinitesimally small margin; Saul out-and-out tells Adama he plans on going as crazy as possible and that he'll disappear into the Fleet.

On the basestar, Baltar learns some things that are very interesting and wonderful about Cylons. They spend their existence in "projections," hallucinations of their own design. Unlike most Americans, though, their basestars have half-chrome "Hybrid" pilots that speak oracular gibberish. What else? Um, all Cylons are creepy naked swingers, but we knew that. Did not know that they've now decided to settleâ€¦on Earth. (Or that Gaius might be a Cylon. Thought never once occurred.)



Baltar and Gaeta, working on the basestar and Galactica separately, come to the same conclusion about the location of Earth, and send scouting missions to check out a double nebula. The Cylon scout ship is infected with a virus that kills all Cylons -- Threes, Eights, Sixes, Centurions, Raiders and all -- so Baltar volunteers to investigate. He finds a beacon left behind as a trap by the 13th Tribe -- but doesn't tell anybody about this 2,000-year-old human trick. The scout group from Galactica fares better, except for how Lieutenant Sharon Agathon -- now callsign Athena -- is with them, and has no idea about the virus.

**Recap:** Previously: Sharon was called to service in the Colonial Fleet; Tigh spoke at length of his "purpose," to hold the line until Adama returned to New Caprica, and then killed Ellen; Adama saved everybody; Kacey's mommy took off with her; and the Cylons took off with Gaius, and were characteristically upfront about his conditional survival.

Gaius meets Chip Six on a beautiful beach; she's wearing a red bikini and there's a strange dreamy bright sun all over the place. Remember how weird it was [when the Pegasus showed up?](#) The music was all crazy and the camera acted like it was on drugs? That's Gaius's life, through this entire episode. It's really disorienting and dreamlike and creepy/amazing. Even the Six fugues have an extra weirdness and a sideways light, like at dusk. "Good to see you," says Gaius, and intimates that Chip Six is somehow connected to the Sixness: "I far prefer these picturesque settings for little our interludes, don't you? I thought you had abandoned me to your Cylon comrades." She grins archly and shifts on her chaise-lounge. "Would I do that?" (Heh: Ambiguous and terrifying? Me?) He's all, "You're nuts, remember?" He says she's always been more "unpredictable" than her flesh and blood counterparts, and I don't know if he means as an hallucination or as a lady or what, because of her response: "A man that loves women as much as you should have learned that a long time ago." He admits he's a slow learner, which in turn earns him a slow clap. "Then take this period as a time to learn all you can about the Cylons," she says in her "fucking pay attention" voice. "You'll need it in the days ahead." He asks if she's got something in particular on the horizon, and she shakes her head. "Cylon psychology is based on projection." Bwuh? "It's how they choose to see the world around them. The

only difference is, you choose to see me." (I can't unpack this concept quite yet. I think I might be getting clinical psych bleedthrough where you assume people are talking about the thing you know, like how the psychiatrists and therapists always write us hate mail when we misuse the term "psychodrama," so I'm going to keep quiet. But I think I really like this, because it makes them weirder, and harder to understand, and more like Americans. Or maybe Six is just a Sagittarius, which would explain a hell of a lot. You know Gaius for sure is.) "What are you really?" he asks, and she turns away. "You're either connected to the woman I knew in Caprica, or you're just a damaged part of my subconscious struggling for self-expression. So which one is it?" Option C: "I'm an angel of God sent here to help you. Just as I always have been." Frankly, I'm about to take option C and say frack it, but you know. No [polar bears](#) just yet.

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Gaius jerks awake in his basestar cell and stares around and has some screwed up psychic visions: rain inside, moisture on the pulsing walls. A woman with white skin, staring up into an indoor sun. Time shifts: "We're all part of one big ecosystem," says Three, and he stares -- wearing his scientist drag, suit and glasses -- that he can feel that. "Breathing." As the projection (maybe) shifts again to the real now, he hears her telling him to get used to it. "So, what'd he say?" asks Caprica, appearing in the real. "I haven't asked him yet," Three shrugs. About what? "Earth," Caprica says definitively. He boggles. "Earth," says Three in her frightening, friendly way. "It's the Thirteenth Colony?" He's still freaked. Caprica asks if he knows where it is, and he immediately shakes his head. "Not really, no." Three nods like she thought so, and calls it "unfortunate." "There was a hope -- my hope -- that if you knew the way to Earth, it would justify keeping you alive a little longer. Come on, Six." She just pulled like a hat trick of good cop/bad cop with nothing up her sleeves, so of course Gaius stoolies out immediately. "Wait. Wait, wait! Now when I say that I do not know exactly where Earth is, that is not to say that I do not know a very great deal about its probable location. Honestly, I spent hours, days, weeks, months and months on a map that Adama and Roslin found on Kobol. And I correlated that with astrometric observations. I doubt anyone here can make the same claim." Caprica just stares at him while he shits his britches, and then nods sharply. "We'll get back to

you." But why do they care? "Because we're looking for it," Caprica says, like it's self-evident. "You are?" he says, but it's less like a question and more like trying not to boot. "Yes," says Three brightly. "We've decided that Earth's going to be our new home."

Credits; episode by the glamorous and not un-Threelike Anne Cofell Saunders, whom you might remember for [Sesha Abinell](#), and for co-writing [a couple of the other best-ever episodes](#); probably though you know her name for writing/inflicting the Hugo-nominated and aforementioned episode they call "Pegasus," aka "The one where shit got real for real." 41,422 souls in the Fleet. Near a moon we find two squads of Vipers, Laser Tag dogfighting (awesome), as Adama watches from CIC. Apollo -- back to CAG -- is leading Red team with Starbuck under him; Kat's on Blue team. "Red team, Apollo. As soon as we clear the moon, we're gonna be on their dradis, so keep your eyes up. They're gonna hit us with everything they got. Stay in formation, Starbuck. Nacho, you're my wingman." Kat alerts Blue team, calling Red team "lazy fracks," and it's worth noting that not only is Hotdog on Blue team, but has become crazy hot. Starbuck sights him and hits him immediately, and it's nice to see her in the cockpit again; Apollo goes after Kat and misses her entirely. Kat taunts him, but as long as she doesn't do that awful NOW NOW NOW [Dawn Summers](#) bullshit we'll be okay. She's cool now. Starbuck heads after Kat without Apollo's clearance and he tells her to stay in formation, sending Nacho. She disregards, grandstanding, and ends up ramming Kat.

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On deck, Chief's finally acting normal, horrified by Starbuck's blown compressor and even more horrified when Cally confirms that she was so bingo there aren't even fumes in her fuel tank. He wonders how on earth she managed to land, and she retreats even further back into the Starbuck persona that caused her to fuck up in the first place: "Pointed it toward the deck and stopped when I got here." Which would be bad ass, if it weren't at least as fake and hollow as the Starbuck personality always was. Hotdog complains/is amazed with Kat about what a dick Starbuck's being, and Apollo comes running up with the entire TOE sticking out of his ass sideways. "If you want to die, I will open up an airlock, but you are not taking one of my Vipers with you." First of all: [ouch](#). Second of all, ouch, because I hate to see Starbuck acting the

fool, but even more than that, I hate to see her acting the way people always said she did, because now they're right, because there's nothing behind it: "The bird's on the deck. I'm on the deck. I don't know what you're bitching about." (Again: would be bad ass, if she hadn't lost her Consequence Pass back on New Caprica, but now she's just being disgusting.) I don't give a frack what you do, Starbuck, you're done flying," Apollo spits, and takes off. Everybody stares. It is ugly. It is an ugly scene!

Metalepsis! Trrrrrrrrransitive property! Tigh's quarters, where he's drinking wildly and imagining strange noises. Voices, meaning Ellen's voice, meaning he's in huge trouble right about now. "I can't believe you did that to me," she murmurs, and he starts. "Don't look at me like that!" she shouts, and he goes looking all over his room for her. His tiny room. He heads out into the corridor calling her name, and the thing about that is that there are like hundreds of people in the corridor, and he's busily going nuts in front of them, screaming for his dead wife. Whom he killed. He spots a blonde in the distance and runs after her, pushing people aside in his hurry; Ellen's voice becomes another woman's voice. "If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times," she complains. ("I told you and I told you," he said to her [once](#).) Saul grabs the woman and spins her around, breathless: "Ellen, I'm right here." It's not Ellen, it's just another refugee. Another person who left something back there. "What is this? Let go of me," she says, shaken by his weirdness, and he stares as she takes the child she was yelling at and runs away down the hall, into the river of people, leaving him alone, screaming at a ghost, in the middle of the world. He stares down, at nothing. What happened to Gina when she had no purpose left?

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Starbuck heads for her bunk in the Pilots' barracks and is attacked by a small adorable blonde missile shouting her name. "Kara, Kara!" She stares down at Kacey as the girl's mother approaches. "Captain Thrace? I'm sorry, don't you remember me? I'm Julia [Prynne? That would be funny. Sounds more like Brenham, though.] I'm Kacey's mom." Starbuck remembers. Kacey demands a hug from Starbuck, who looks like she's about to pass out, as Julia explains that they've been living in "Camp Oilslick," the refugee camp on the hangar deck. "Kacey's been asking to see you for days. I sent messages. I thought you know,

maybe you'd come for a visit... " Starbuck keeps her voice level, for Kacey's sake, but she doesn't drop Julia's eyes. "You seem like a really nice person, so I'm gonna be honest with you. The last thing I need is a two-year-old friend. And Kacey sure as hell does not need me in her life, so do us both a favor and do not bring her around here again, okay?" She picks the girl up, her one-time daughter, one-time savior, and puts her tenderly but firmly in Julia's arms. "Go to your mom, Kase." Julia stares for a second, taken aback and hurt, and her mouth forms a thin line. "Sure. Sorry, don't let us keep you up." She hurries out of the barracks, comforting Kacey -- who, as usual, is taking some shit in stride -- and murmuring to herself: "Sorry, honey, we gotta go." Awkward. Starbuck throws herself onto her bunk and stares, up, at nothing.

In the training room, Lee checks his weight on the scales, and as they balance, we pull out and see that Lee has become possibly even more buff than before. Maybe Roslin gave him some kind of stem cell-derived weight loss drugs or something. Helo stands with him, doing his usual wonderful Helo magic spells: "That's it. See? See, I told you you could do it. You did great!" Lee shakes his head, grinning: "Remind me never to let that happen again." Helo smirks -- "You got it, Slim" -- but he's serious. "Ever."

Roslin, Adama, and Gaeta meet in the Galactica war room. Gaeta tells them he's been putting together Gaius's work on the path of the Thirteenth Tribe's journey to Earth. He catches himself saying "President Baltar," but quickly and ham-fistedly corrects himself. Roslin's exposition infection kicks in, in a major way. "I'm curious, Mr. Gaeta. What is it that you trust about Dr. Baltar's research? How do you know it's not another one of his lies?" Gaeta calls their attention to Gaius's "extraordinary capacity for self-preservation" and assures them that he would have worked hard on getting to Earth if that was where he wanted to be. Baltar's self-obsession being as much of a given as gravity and photosynthesis, they are immediately convinced. Gaeta explains that Gaius was apparently correlating the Fleet's own "astrometric readings," the map of constellations from Kobol, and the Scrolls of Pythia. Adama is thrown by that last, but you know Roslin's down: "Pythia is supposed to have chronicled the original journey of the Thirteenth Tribe on its way to Earth." (Pause: She what? She was an Oracle. She didn't have to go with them or come back to Kobol in order to do a bunch of drugs and imagine their journey, and/or get received wisdom from the heavens. She

could chronicle all kinds of shit just sitting on her oracular couch eating caramels.)

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Gaeta quotes one passage in particular: "And the caravan of the heavens was watched over by a great lion with a mighty blinking eye..." and Adama finishes: "... red and blue." Gaeta's like, "Exactly!" But it's been a while since Adama had to pretend scripture was a valid way to live your life or lead the Fleet or lie about in order to impose a provisional sense of order in humanity: "Exactly what? You're looking for a lion's head?" Roslin grins sweetly at him across the table: "With a mighty blinking eye." Adama's like, "And it's... blinking." They blink at each other, and Roslin -- kind of sheepishly, considering her bizarre history with Pythia -- lowers her eyes: "Well, they're Scrolls. They speak in metaphors?" Gaeta's feeling them both. "Initially I thought the doctor might be off his meds as well, sir? But then I found this note here, where he had written blinking equals pulsar." He expositos for us idiots, using Roslin -- the former secretary of Education for twelve planets, mind you -- who doesn't know what a pulsar is: "They're the rotating cores of dead stars, they emit a blast of radio waves." So from a distance, they'd appear to blink. "Right," he nods. "The doctor found two in very close mutual orbit within this sector. Uh, the spectrographic readings that I found show one will appear to be red, and one will appear to be blue." Red team, blue team: dead stars, whittled to their core; giving off radiation in space, whirling and confused. "Now...these pulsars appear to be in this nebula. We have never had a direct look at this area. But it is possible, with a couple of eyeballs out there, they might look at the nebula and see..." Adama nods. "A giant lion's head." As though this is the first time they've gone haring off based on little-to-no sound evidence that Pythia wasn't just a sad old saint of the apocalypse on drugs, Roslin quirks her mouth and looks at Adama. "Well, it looks like this is the best thing we've got going." She smiles brightly and beautifully: "So unless you object, Admiral, I suggest we go lion hunting." Always a good idea.

In the basestar corridor, Caprica's assuring Gaius that the "navigational markers" he and Gaeta simultaneously have developed will be useful. "They sent a baseship out to investigate the pulsars, and look for this lion's head of yours." Baltar whines



about how she has to be serious with him about how conflicted and ambiguous he is feeling about finding Earth. She laughs at him and notes how all this internal conflict developed right after he managed to once more escape death. She leads him through a room where one of the Eights is doing naked tai chi -- she ignores them utterly -- and reminds him that there's a lot of skepticism still about his motives. Gaius apologizes to Naked Boomer for interrupting her, and Caprica rolls her eyes: "Come on, Gaius." Out in the corridor again, Gaius is confused, thinking they're going in circles. "I'm sure it all looks the same to you, doesn't it? Be hard for any human to navigate around here. Especially without projecting." He says something about how -- not Chip Six but Caprica -- has mentioned "projection" before. "I'm not quite sure what you're talking about. It helps you to what, exactly?" She asks if he's ever daydreamed, and he does a perfect, gorgeous deadpan: "I do have an active imagination." (I'd slap him, just in case.) "Well, we don't have to imagine. We project. We choose to see our environment in any form we wish, whenever we wish. For instance, right now you see us as standing in a hallway, but I see it as a forest." Reality complies. "Filled with trees, birds, sunlight." Back in the corridor, Gaius smiles. "Like the walks that you and I used to take. On Caprica." As a Doral passes them, in both the forest and the hall, Caprica shakes her head, still smiling but not with her voice. "The aesthetic is what gives me pleasure. Not the specific memories. Instead of staring at blank walls, I choose to surround myself with a vision of God's creation."

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Time, I guess, for a quick Chip Six fugue, since Caprica's being weird again and just tripped Gaius out a little bit, so it's back to the beach. "Right, now I think I understand projection, but it's a bit of a coincidence, isn't it? That I could see such a vivid reality that I've created, and the Cylon projection experience seems to be so similar?" Not really. You're nuts, you're a narcissist, and you want nothing better than to turn back time to when you hadn't destroyed the Twelve Colonies and were getting regular tail. "Is it a coincidence?" asks Six, and he stops there in the sand, with the sun so bright behind him that you can barely see his face. This episode is so beautiful. "Well, what are you saying? There's a connection? What, because of my experiences with you -- am I a Cylon?" Back in the corridor, Caprica whips around to

look at him, totally grossed out. "What was that?" Don't you hate it when you hallucinate out loud about the lover whose death you directly caused? In a hallway? "Oh, nothing. Just talking out loud. Silly me." But I mean, give it a sec. It's funny, and he's a dickwad and all, but this is just... really sad, that he would even go there. It's one very messy and sad and intriguing thing to kiss Leoben after four months and mean it, but you don't automatically assume that you're him. You know?

In the Galactica mess, it goes like this: Sharon and Helo are sitting with Racetrack, being completely civil. At another table, Hotdog and Starbuck are playing cards with Kat and being somewhat more rowdy. Sharon asks if Racetrack would honestly want to go back to being an ECO after having piloted a Raptor for at least the last -- what, year and a half? -- and notes that she's gotten good, but Racetrack notes that there are too many pilots for the Raptors they have now. "Anything to keep me flying, at this point. You want me, I'm yours, Boomer." Racetrack's always been classy, but if you take into account her crush on Helo, she's like the anti-Cally for that sentence alone. "Uh, no," Sharon stutters. "Boomer was... she was someone else." I like that not only for obvious reasons, but this is also Sharon's return to piloting, too, which is why this conversation is happening. She was commissioned, did the launch key op on New Caprica, and now she has her bird back too. (Not too bad, especially considering this Sharon has never flown a day in her life, in military terms.) Helo notes her face at this point and realizes it's time for another Helo spell. "Listen up! We need a new call sign for Lieutenant Agathon." The pilots all over the mess -- as Starbuck watches -- call out hilarious names for her. "Chrome Dome! Titania! Lightbulb! Wind-up Toy! Raptor Adapter! Microchip! Digital Dame! Mayflower! Carburetor! Tincan! Toaster Babe! Transistor! Robopilot!" There are like a hundred (none of them as cool as the ones I made up last season, such as Man And His Symbols or Whitechocolatespaceegg, but it's a fun nod to that old game. My favorites are "Titania" -- because of Gaius's term right now away with the fairies -- and "Transistor" for some reason. Also "Raptor Adapter," because that's continuity and humor all in one, and "Toaster Babe," because I want to hear them say that shit on comms.) and Hotdog speaks up: "How 'bout Athena?" (Can't call him "dumb old Hotdog" anymore. I don't know yet.) Helo picks his out of the crowd: "What was that?"

Hotdog, not dumb at all, schools their asses. "You know, the Goddess of Wisdom and War. Usually accompanied by the Goddess of Victory." There's silence and a dawning smile on Sharon's beautiful face, and Helo's. One Pilot nearly whispers, "She likes it." Helo smiles back at her, and they kiss. "Athena it is." Which I always thought was Laura, but then, I'm positive Starbuck's going to be the one to rescue Hera, so hopefully I'll get my intuition score back up after last season at some point, and anyway, wasn't that sweet? Such a good day we're having!

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... So then Tigh walks in. Racetrack loudly invites him to sit with them, which is both sweet and dumb of her considering that Helo has Single White Female'd about 2/3 of Tigh's shit at this point and is edging into more of his territory with every breath. He doesn't even look around, just heads for Starbuck and asks if she's got anything to drink. (Everything you wanted, in the worst possible way.) Kat hoots out a funny welcome and he sits, noting that they're not playing Triad, but the incredible foreshadowy "Dead Man's Chest." "Cutthroat game," he says to Starbuck. "Not usually your style." She leans back, Starbucking up to her eyeballs. "It is now. And I'm in it to win. You don't like it, find another game." He grabs a chair from Sharon and Helo's table -- still not looking at them -- and commences bitching. "Oh, there's some straight talk. Have you seen the lineup outside the head? Fifteen civilians standing in line picking their noses and waiting to take a shower." Starbuck -- an equal opportunity haterator if ever there were one -- immediately joins in on the civilian-bashing, grunting about how they "think they run the ship now." A pilot at their table that I don't recognize, but I'm sure you do, points out that it's better to have way too many civilians than be empty and sad and sparking like during the settlement: "The ship was like a tomb." Tigh tells him that if he wants to know what alone feels like -- and note please the continuing poetic powers of Saul Tigh, because he just said more with one word than the rest of them say on a good day -- they should spend a few weeks in a Cylon holding cell. Like his missing eye is the thing that's aching. Like there aren't fifteen ghosts and more weighing him down. Fifteen men on Saul Tigh's chest, pushing down with all their weight. Kat grins and speaks up. Which is interesting, because she spends more time deliberately throwing herself in front of the truck called "Kara Thrace" than anybody besides Lee Adama, and she

always knows she's doing it, and she always knows it's going to fuck her up, but she keeps doing it, because she is awesome, and because she loves Starbuck, still, the way Saul loves Bill.

Kat tries to speak their language -- violent, ugly, angry -- and defuse them, herd everybody back over to the same side; drag her foot across the salt on the floor. (The unbroken line of a house divided: I was right. [It's tears.](#)) "Yeah, it was a bitch on both sides. And it wasn't exactly easy coming up with a plan to save your sorry butts." While a stupid child would be able to recognize that she's being deliberately crude/flippant about it in order to get everybody over the hump that Saul just tossed in their path, we're talking about Starbuck here. Stupid children could do almost anything better than her right now. She takes her at her word. "You guys had it rough, huh? Hot showers, three squares a day. Viper jocks didn't even take a shot till you jumped into orbit." Helo calls, across the salt: "Hey. We all made sacrifices." "Is that so?" asks Tigh, sticking his nasty old self right in the middle of this, crowbarring the problem as wide open as he can, focusing on Helo, who keeps taking everything away. (Remember that friend you had in grade school that moved away that summer? Remember what a dick he was that whole week? Remember how he was just saying goodbye? Listen.) "While you were pinning wings on your Cylon girlfriend, our people were strapping homemade bombs to their chests. Doing whatever they could to take the bastards out. So forgive me if I don't get all misty over your sacrifices."

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"You seem distracted, Gaius," says Caprica. "You can rest easy, at least for now. The data on Earth's location, and your valiant rescue of the baby, has gone a long way toward impressing the others." There are shots of the seven models we know, dreamlike and shifting. "I used to think you and I would have a baby one day," Caprica smiles dreamily. (Somewhere, Chip Six is like, "I know, right?" but then quickly does some Crazy Baby Math.) He clears his head. "There are only 12 Cylon models. But in the entire occupation on New Caprica, I only saw seven. Now here again, the same seven. Who are the final five?" Her baby smile falls clattering to the floor. "I can't talk about that." Can't? Or won't? "I can't. It's complicated, but we don't talk about them. Ever." He presses when he should not press. "But you'd know one

of them, wouldn't you, if you saw them? One of the final five. If they were to walk past here right -- " And just then, Three comes running up. Interesting.

So okay. This isn't the whole thing yet, but here's what I've got: Life on the basestar is, for us, dreamy and unreal, because Cylon logic is not human logic. We're not in a human space, we're in the kind of world where consciousness is only differentiated twelve different ways, instead of one for every single entity. We're getting a slice of what Boomer and Sharon and Six have always known: The soft edges of reality in a group mind, the way memories can pass like a shroud across the world before you, facts rising to the surface when we need them, math and GPS caroms drifting like clouds before the moon, memories presenting as prophecy and vice versa. We're not in an alien space, but merely an undifferentiated one. Without ego or personal consciousness, there's no need for that "reducing valve" Huxley talked about -- it's all the same. It's not a question of denying reality, it's a question of not denying any particular part of reality in favor of what's at hand. Ontological, cosmological ADD. "Projection" isn't a diss on Cylon selfishness: it's the equivalent of changing your cell phone face, or the skin on your mp3 program. The math underneath stays the same, and is shared among us all. This is the state that Pythia speaks from, and [Amanda Plummer](#) and Leoben -- and [Drusilla](#), and even [Tara](#) for a short painful while -- and anybody else who looked on the face of God and went mad: the roiling undeniable sea underneath everything that we spend our lives building walls and choices around so we don't lose it completely. Prophets rock at telling you things that don't make sense but are still true, but they can't balance their checkbooks for shit. No wonder the Cylons know Colonial scripture better than most of the crew of the Galactica: they live there all the time. But also, maybe it's even more fabulous than that: maybe she can see a forest because she's been in a forest before, and that's the forest she's currently, actually in, as she says. Maybe "projection" is a willed way of reducing experience into the best possible shape, and the underneath calculations stay the same. Maybe they weave reality out of all the sights and sounds and math they've ever seen or heard or done, all the time, the way we collage together an afternoon flipping back and forth between Tyra and [Farscape](#) reruns and TV recaps on the laptop. And if they can do it with linear memories, maybe they

can do it with time itself. Maybe she can see a forest because she'll be in a forest someday. Which is cool as fuck, but also really kind of terrifying. (Though not as terrifying as the fact that, if I'm right, that makes Leoben the sanest one, if you think about it.) Anyway, that's my theory right now.

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"Six, we have a problem," says Three. Ignoring Gaius as well as Three does, Doral steps up. "A baseship. The one we sent to investigate the pulsars in the Lion Nebula. We've lost contact." The trouble, Three explains, is that the missing baseship's status is a zero. "We received a garbled distress call, then silence," says Doral. Scary for our Fleet, unimaginable for the Cylon. They've even got special ships in order to make sure everybody stays connected up. "Not surprisingly, their Hybrid sent us a confusing set of data. Our Hybrid is analyzing it." Gaius asks about the Hybrids and Six tells him to shut it, and then they all go running through the basestar corridors. Or, as I choose to see it, The Giant Banana Republic Where Everything Is Free And There Are Espresso Machines On Every Corner, Each Operated By Its Own [Hateful Jim](#) In A Disheveled Tuxedo, And Marguerite Moreau Is Like, "Do You Like These Shoes?" And I'm Like "Totally," And Cupid Ran One Million Episodes, And Plus Tina Fey Is There Also.

Basestar war room, where there are a bunch of those wet data panels like [in the detention center](#). The seven models place their hands on panels, reading the data. "Our Hybrid's deciphered part of the data set that we received from our scout ship," says Eight, and Doral shakes his head, terrified. "This can't happen to us. It's impossible." Simon is more firm: "It is not only possible, it may have been inevitable, once we took human form." Wow. "We're not human," Doral hisses. "We're not like them." Simon isn't so sure: "God has chosen this time, this place, to test us. Whether we fail or pass the test is up to us." Gaius asks for a WTF and Caprica fills in the blanks. "The missing baseship, it's been infected by some kind of disease." Eight chimes in: "It's killing them. All of them." Simon tells us that they can tell a Cylon carrying this disease into a resurrection ship might infect and kill all the Cylon. And if you think that sounds awesome, go back and watch "Pegasus" again. "All right," says Three, "We make sure that the resurrection ship is out of range, then we jump to their location. Send in a group of Centurions to make sure..." Nope.



"The data set indicates that as soon as the Hybrid was infected, the Centurions started shutting down," Eight says. "We don't know how ours are gonna be affected." Three assumes the Raiders and baseships are also susceptible, and Simon nods. "Of course. We are all created from the same genetic pool." Meaning, Doral finishes up, no Cylon can board the ship without risking getting infected. I can't wait to get a better handle on the models and their differences and philosophies -- there are some really interesting dimensions being set up here, as fast as things are moving, and watching them build and accrete is hopefully going to be one of the awesome things this season.

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Time for another beach fugue, where Chip Six speaks evenly and urgently and does not brook refusal: "Say you'll go aboard the infected baseship and investigate what happened. You sent them to that nebula. Remember?" He asks if she's mad -- Can you imagine if your imaginary girlfriend went crazy in your head? -- and she laughs. "You have to prove to them you can be counted on in an emergency," and worth keeping alive. He asks what about if he catches the disease, and she chuckles a bit more darkly. "What are the chances that a human could catch something that infects a Centurion or a Raider? That is, if you're human." And this part is very subtle, but very complicated, because he is a man of many wishes, and she's offering to grant them all: "And if you're really a Cylon -- one of the final five you haven't seen yet -- then wouldn't you rather just get it over with and die?" To live and prove his worth, on the one hand. On the other, to be the thing that Cylons fear -- a Final Fiver -- or to be the thing that humans fear -- a Cylon period -- or to be dead. Those are the options she's giving him. She kisses him and it is beautiful onscreen, and he jumps back to the basestar.

"I'll go!" he shouts abruptly. Three is confused. "Yes, I'll go." He counts it out: he's a trained scientist, he can go to the baseship without dying, and he can bring back the thing they are freaking out about: "Observations about the Cylons, their physical condition. Bring back information," he adds -- the thing they want most -- and adds some extra leverage: "About this disease, which now threatens all of you." Simon worries that they can't land anyway without infecting the Raiders, and Gaius points out that they've got to have stolen some kind of Colonial vessels. Eight

nods. "We could program one of our Raptors to approach on autopilot." (Especially she could, you know?) Three nods, machine logic closes it out, faster than it took to discuss it out loud. Say what you will about the Cylons, but they don't fuck around when it's decision making time. (And when it turns out wrong, they just re-vector and move out again, which is somewhat less laudatory than the not-fucking-around part.) "Prepare to jump the ship. Make sure the resurrection ship knows to stay behind, out of range." Caprica looks at Gaius suspiciously: "A truly... selfless act." (I'd slap him, just in case.)

Hotdog refills Tigh's glass and toasts "knowing that somebody will always have your back." All the Pilots cheer, but that would have been too cheerful for Tigh even before he went nuts and lost all his stuff he ever had. "The sentiment's good, but in my book, trust is an overrated commodity." Starbuck nods and drinks deep to that one. Finally, Kat decides to take out the salt line with the bazooka of her huge mouth. "Frack you guys." Starbuck laughs innocently: "What is your problem, Katraine?" Specifically? "You, Captain. And all this 'Us Against Them' crap." Starbuck goes for another beer, laughing at her and Starbucking into the stratosphere. "Truth hurts, doesn't it." Kat's had enough. "You know what, Starbuck? Whatever happened to you down there, why don't you take it out on the Cylons? Because we busted our ass to get you off that rock." She's right, but so is Tigh: "Do you think that means anything? Every colonist that landed on New Caprica was loyal, to a point. It was amazing watching those people that you thought you knew go over to the Cylons." Which has zero to do with anything, but also: when I said last week this was going to be the huge problem, I didn't think I meant FIVE MINUTES FROM RIGHT WHEN I SAID IT. "At least in the end, we knew where we stood, huh?" asks Starbuck, kissing his ass, but look, kid: he works alone. "Is that so? Then how come you are off flight duty, and some Cylon lover is holding down my post? Don't kid yourselves, you're on your own in this life. Each and every one of us." Now more than ever. Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum. "Why don't you tell that to the pilots that died getting you off that rock?" Awkward squared.

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Helo reports to Adama in his office about how Gaeta is briefing Sharon and Racetrack on the scouting mission to the nebula.

"You mean Athena and Racetrack," says Adama lightly, and Helo swells up to nearly twice his height with love and pride. Since he was already nine feet tall, this causes him to bust through Adama's ceiling and into the floor above. "Word travels fast!" he says. He and Adama are pleased together, and after the moment's passed, Adama asks -- vis-À-vis the relative speed of word -- about the morale dip on the flight deck. Helo assures him the crew can handle it, but Adama has more words. "I'm also told that Colonel Tigh is spending a lot of time down in the Pilots' rec room." Helo gives it up: "Both him and Starbuck, sir. They've been holding court. Second-guessing the rescue, bad-mouthing the crew that stayed up with Galactica. Suddenly, if you weren't in the ground war, it's like you can't be trusted." And people, Adama surmises, are listening. "They're destroying morale and unit cohesion." Adama's huge lie for this week: "They both know better." Rather than reminding the clearly senile Admiral that we are talking about Kara Thrace and Saul Tigh, Helo covers for his dementia: "... I don't think they care, sir."

Gaius stares at the Hybrid, the pale wet woman from his dream. She sits in a resurrection pool wearing a black snood, like a hearth goddess. Her body fades into ship and connections where she floats; Giger tubes and Craig Morrison rubber. And -- off the Pythia tip -- she says the following. "Two protons expelled at each coupling site creates the mode of force the embryo becomes a fish that we don't enter until a plate we're here to experience evolve the little toe atrophy don't ask me how I'll be dead in a thousand light years thank you thank you Genesis turns to its source reduction occurs stepwise though the essence is all one end of line. After your system check diagnostic functions within parameters repeats the harlequin the agony exquisite the colors run the path of ashes fifty-two percent of heat exchanger cross-collateralized with hyperdimensional matrix upper senses repair ordered relay to zero, zero, zero, zero..." If you know me at all, you know I did time in Tori Amos purgatory, so allow me to translate: Two protons with equal and opposite spin, moved any distance apart, react instantaneously to changes made in or upon each other. They are connected in a way that moves underneath the world we know (project); they are indivisible but opposed. One makes a move -- sometimes predator, sometimes prey -- and the other can't help but follow along, making a corresponding change. The trick is to live within that system, on either side, and

remember that the essence is all one: we're here to experience, evolve, the agony exquisite, because in the higher level functioning of the Hybrids -- if Cylons experience our regular time and space as a five-dimensional solid, the Hybrids are the next step above that, which is why they sound crazy to us, because we're crushing their thoughts down into our smaller number of dimensions in order to process them -- there's no way to even recognize the division between the two protons. Cylons and humans all look the same to the Hybrid, the way that human conflict looks to the Cylon like one hand attacking the other. Chip Six and Chip Gaius, and now Athena and Gaius, are the dots in the yin-yang, the first physically observable steps toward reconciling this senseless division. Not that it will ever work, or we'd like it if it did: that's fusion, not synthesis. Goes splode.

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"Is it aware of us?" asks Gaius, and Caprica considers him. "Of course. She's aware of everything aboard." The Hybrid continues: "... End of line. New paragraph. Pancreatic fluid at one with the continuum of evolutionary matrix we're here to experience evolve the little toe reduction occurs stepwise though the essence is all one full stop. New paragraph. System check..." Gaius asks if she has any idea what "it's" talking about. Like this show would exist if she did. If any of them could. "No. Most Cylons think the conscious mind of the Hybrid has simply gone mad, and the vocalizations we hear are meaningless." But not everybody, Gaius wonders. "Thank you Genesis turns ..." Caprica tells him that "the ones you know as Leoben" believe every word from her mouth "means something," that God literally speaks through her. I swear to you that I will not talk crazy again for the rest of the recap, but: word. "She sort of controls the baseship, does she?" asks Gaius, his mind blown. He's a scientist, he has nothing like the capacity for this. "Well, she is the baseship, in a very real sense." He stares down, weirded out and with maybe a little bit of undeserved pity. "Mind gone mad." The Hybrid continues to talk the whole time, by the way, but it's more of the same: the answer, if they could hear it, over and over forever. "She experiences life very differently than we do, Gaius. She swims in the heavens. Laughs at stars, breathes in cosmic dust. Maybe Leoben's right. Maybe she does see God..." Can you give me a better description than what you just said? Six gets that religious look she has, and they stare down. "...they cry for succor in the

dark of the light." Caprica snaps out of it. "We're wasting time." And the Hybrid screams: "... Jump!" She shudders orgasmically, for reasons which should be obvious by now: if projection is weaving memory and thought and personality, jumping is weaving the stuff of the universe itself. With your mind and your body, on a level we can barely theorize about. If she didn't look so fucked up and scary, that would be the best job ever.

Gaius's borrowed Raptor heads for the infected basestar, enters its bay with some directional jets, and he steps out onto the deck. In a full spacesuit, of course. The white and red and black on our basestar is darkness, blueness, sickly green. On the floor, a Three gasps for air; there are sick bodies everywhere. An Eight vomits. Gaius calls it in on comms, stricken. He drops his flashlight, taking pictures of the fallen Cylons everywhere, and notes on the floor a strange device, the size of an oak barrel, made of flanged metal. "What the hell is that?" As he investigates it, a black-haired Six on the floor grabs his ankle. He rushes to her side with a first aid kit. "You're severely dehydrated. You must drink some water." She begs him to kill her, and he balks. "You don't understand, there is no resurrection ship nearby. You will not be downloaded into a new body. You will just be gone." She weeps, desperate, barely breathing. "I saw how they died. Please -- please, I can't bear that." Gaius begins to panic. Like to an impressive degree. He takes a blood sample and she screams; he promises to bring back a treatment. She coughs; he begs her to breathe. "Please. Please take some water." Six focuses on his face. "You're -- you're from Galactica." He declares seriously: "No. I'm from a baseship." He waves toward the metal object and asks what it is. "We found it floating at these coordinates. Must be some kind of beacon, or marker." He muses that it looks very old. "Must've been left by the Thirteenth Tribe," she exposit. "Infected, poisoned. Left by some humans like you, to destroy us." She is pathetic and sad and gross. "A human device filled with a pestilence. You sent us to this place." He shakes his head, protesting, but she keeps going. "You know we'd bring it aboard." He begs her to stop: "You don't know what you're saying. This is the disease speaking through you. Calm down. I am going to bring help..." She shouts that he knew it was there, that he, and the other baseships even, knew it was there. He begs her to be quiet, to calm down. "I would never do anything to hurt you." She continues to scream, accuses him of lying, of bringing the Cylons

to their doom, that he's going to bring them all there to die, and he keeps screaming at her to stop. Begging her to keep quiet. "You're gonna infect all of us!" She screams, and he finally freaks out, crushing her throat with his boot. "Gaius," comms a Doral. "Do you hear us? Gaius, do you read? Is anyone alive? Speak to us. Do you read? What do you see? Are any of them alive?" Gaius reports back. "This is Gaius Baltar. I'm returning to the baseship." And what does he see? Staring at the beacon, already turning on another race as fast as he can, already looking for heroism again: "I see nothing. Nothing of consequence. There's nothing left to do here."

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"Nobody likes it," sighs Three, "But we have to make a terrible choice. Do we attempt a rescue, and risk the lives of our Fleet -- even our species -- or do we leave them?" Simon shrugs. "The answer won't be found in science, because there's no cure in science." I... don't know what that means, but Eight's not having it. "Look at them, do we just leave them?" Leoben points out that this would be condemning them to death; Caprica is really upset. "Even the humans don't leave their own," she says. Leoben isn't on her side either: "They must be sacrificed for the greater good." Simon says there's a greater question, and Three agrees: "How did this happen?" Simon's answer: Gaius. "It's Baltar, of course," says Doral definitively. I love him out of nowhere this season just like Tigh and Gaius. This show is so weird. "It's his fault. He led us there deliberately. He's been working with Galactica the whole time..." Gaius whines and protests and the usual; Three draws the line of logic: "Baltar, we followed your coordinates and found a disease with no treatment or cure." Well, when you put it like that. "... They're doomed," moans Caprica. "Never to return." She's always had the strangest sense of pity. "Perhaps God would smile upon us for our mercy," says Doral, and Eight is disgusted: "Listen to you! You can barely even speak His name!" Three orders everybody to agree, and I think disagrees suddenly with abandoning "our brothers and sisters" (that sounds more like a Caprica line, though) and then they all descend into shouting and craziness. In its fashion just as terrifying as losing their link to the infected ship, I bet. Gaius continues to screech about his innocence, which does nothing productive but does add to the amazingly intense chaos going on right now. Three finally screams at them to stop -- just short of a Xena yip! -- and slams



her hand into a data panel, shutting everybody up. "We have to leave them. We have to jump, and leave them to their fate. There is no other way."

The Hybrid screams in her chamber. "Mists of dreams drip along the nascent echo and love no more end of line." Those mists, the vapor of disparate memories and experiences, black-haired lives, won't ever coalesce back into their reborn rivers, now: Six, Three, Simon, Eight, Leoben, Doral, Cavil. All losing memories and shapes forever, shedding drops of memory and self, becoming less, to love no more. End of line.

"The Hybrid objects," says the suddenly merciful Doral, and Three smirks. "She doesn't get a vote. Jump the ship." The Hybrid's jumpgasm is... not as enjoyable, this time around. The price of being outside "control" is that you aren't ever in control; she's an angel, but an angel in an engine. Cylons are gross but they get the job done.

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"This disease, it must've come from someplace," says Three to Gaius. "So what did you notice on the infected ship?" He repeats that he saw nothing. "I am just as baffled as you are." Three asks again -- "You noticed nothing suspicious on the infected ship?" -- as Caprica reviews Gaius's pictures from the mission. She sees the beacon, zooms in, and stares up at him. "Nothing whatsoever." She stares at him, her face taut and angry, but she's quiet.

Adama enters the Galactica mess, announced by a pilot, offered a drink by Tigh. "Give me the room," he glares, and everybody heads for the door with a quickness. Including Starbuck, who gets shoved back into her chair. "Stay in your seat." Tigh again offers him a drink, and he glares at both of them -- and neither, he won't be looking them in the eyes today -- and asks for Starbuck's gun. She's confused, but puts it on the table. He cocks it roughly and tosses it onto the table. "Hey, there's a live round in that!" yells Tigh. "Now. One of you, and I don't care who, pick that weapon up and shoot me." Starbuck protests and he gets even more intense. "I didn't say to talk, you've done enough of that already. I said to pick up that weapon, and shoot. What's the matter? No guts? You don't got a pair? You're both fracking

cowards." Tigh tells him to watch his mouth -- dumb, Saul -- and Adama gets in his face. "Or what? You going to turn the rest of my pilots against each other? Poison the crew? You've already done that, Saul. Both of you." Starbuck tells him if he's looking for an apology he can go to hell, and Bill Adama shoves Kara Thrace to the floor. "You were like a daughter to me once. No more. You're malcontented, and a cancer. And I won't have you on my ship. So you have a choice. You figure out how to become a human being again, and an officer, or you can find another place to live. Off of this ship. You're dismissed." She kicks the chair, stands, and leaves angrily. Even though it's her mother's language, her mother's violence, it's still the language she speaks herself, and the one she knows the best. He's doing the best he can.

Adama turns to Tigh. "Are you gonna kick me out of my chair too?" He starts to speak the other language, the one they share: "Listen, I know you've been through a lot..." but Tigh interrupts, with a somewhat valid "Don't patronize me." He tells him to spit it out. "You're full of bile, hatred." And poetry! "And I know that it has something to do with Ellen. And I'm sorry for that. And if you need time, Saul, well, you take all the time you want. But I gotta run a ship. The last thing I need is a one-eyed drunk sitting down here sowing discontent and disobedience. So I'll tell you once again, Saul. You can pick up that weapon and kill me...or you can get your ass back into your quarters and not leave until you're ready to act like the man that I've known for the past thirty years." Tigh, nearly crying, picks up the gun. Holds it in his hands and feels the weight. He tips it up -- not aiming at Adama really -- and ejects the round onto the table with a loud crash. "That man doesn't exist anymore, Bill. And you won't be seeing me again." Drink and the devil had done for the rest: Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum.

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In the Pilots' head, everyone showering and running around, Starbuck takes a knife from her boot and stares at herself in the mirror. The other Pilots are disturbed by this behavior. She sticks the knife in her teeth, gathers her hair, and begins sawing at it. In Tigh's quarters, he pours himself another drink. In Camp Oilslick, Starbuck is wearing full dress, her hair short. She searches the cots, that huge room, looking for somebody. Tigh wanders his

quarters, that small room, looking for somebody. But she's gone.

Starbuck crouches at Julia's side, looking down at Kacey. She considers her friend for a moment, and then wordlessly hands her a doll. Tigh drinks, and looks at photographs, and weeps. Starbuck stares at Kacey, nearly crying, and Kacey throws herself into her arms. Kara begins to cry. And Saul weeps, broken, and gathers up the hard metal corners of a picture frame, pulling them to himself. Pulling memories to a dead man's chest.

Athena and Racetrack's Raptor jumps into the Lion's Head Nebula. Its eye is blinking. Racetrack is freaking. "Oh, my Gods, it's right there. The Lion's Head Nebula, and the blinking eye. Holy crap, it's the road to Earth!" She laughs hysterically, and then they both spot the sick basestar on the periphery. Sharon figures something out, and goes cold, and quiet. Racetrack panics about the basestar, and gets ready to jump back, but Sharon can't hear her: she just stares, and quotes prophecy (paraphrasing King David) to herself. "When God's anger awakens, even the mighty shall fall." That sounds fun. Damn Cylons have a bumper prophecy for every occasion. Racetrack curses, and they begin the jump away.

TO BE CONTINUED! BOOM BOOM BOOM!

# WHEN THE KNOW-NOTHINGS GET CONTROL

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 7 | Aired on 11.09.2006

*A Measure Of Salvation (2)* - Roslin and Adama must make a hard choice when presented with the possibility of Cylon extinction. Helo and Sharon make counterintuitive choices, Apollo goes kill-crazy, and Three tortures Gaius right into a pervy threesome with his own imagination.

**Recaplet:** Galactica's scout ships, featuring Apollo and Sharon (Athena), find five ailing Cylons aboard the drifting basestar, and bring them back. Cottle identifies the virus, a lymphatic encephalitis that comes from rats originally, and confirms that humans -- and Sharon herself, thanks to Hera -- are immune. Cottle designs a vaccine that will save the Cylon, but not permanently: they'll need frequent injections. A Simon model tells them about how Gaius is working with the Cylons now, and how the Snow Crash portion of the virus would spread through resurrection ships. Apollo puts it together and realizes that by murdering their prisoners near a resurrection ship without warning, they can commit genocide and take out the Cylons for good! Roslin, of course, thinks this is the best new version of airlocking she's ever heard of, but Adama is ambivalent. Helo wigs on everybody, fighting Roslin and making some pretty iffy logical leaps in the process, but continuing to be the only sane, much less good, person aboard. Eventually -- and against even Sharon's wishes -- he takes matters into his own hands, killing the prisoners himself before they reach the infection window. Roslin gets that airlockin' look in her eye, but Adama calls her off, agreeing more vociferously with Helo now that the point is moot.

Lest you forget the Cylons are every bit as creepy as the humans, though, Caprica and Three spend the entire episode torturing Gaius for info about the beacon and the virus.

Lest you forget Gaius Baltar is the creepiest motherfracker ever written, though, he spends the entire episode getting off in a sex-type way with Chip Six in the middle of -- and spurred on by -- the torture itself. And then I think he fools Three into thinking he, or she, or both of them, are God. It's a whole God-sex-torture-threesome-projection-crazy thing, as we've come to expect from

the basestar storyline. Which is either awesome or horrible, depending where you stand, but I say: "Bring on the God and sex and torture! Bring on the threesomes, with robots both incarnate and imaginary! This is the best season ever!"

**Recap:** Previously, Gaius led the Cylons toward the Lion Nebula while Gaeta was taking the humans there. What the humans didn't know was that there was a virus on a beacon there which is deadly to Cylons. Gaius did know this, but left out the part about the beacon. His ex-girlfriend Caprica totally knew that he was lying about the beacon, but didn't say anything. The Cylons bounced, leaving the Galactica to discover the tainted basestar without warning -- including the advance scout Raptor piloted by Sharon.

Now: Apollo's riding shotgun in Athena's Raptor, calling in Plan A as they approach the sick baseship. He's gone hard again. Sharon's still mind-blown even though she's returned to Galactica and picked him up in the meantime. I think Major Apollo's the Marine LT on this op; maybe the same way Dualla was his XO on Pegasus. Sharon is having trouble dealing with the site: basestar conky, the Raiders outside her drifting. It's pretty eerie, but when the Raptor starts edging between them to land, it gets a lot creepier. Adama helos to the Raptor that they're clear for entry, and they descend. Helo's quite nervous on his own terms as well, of course. Inside, it is clear the thing is dead. "Galactica, Apollo. No sign of life. Ship appears to be abandoned and powering down." They work their way to the command center, where there are dead models everywhere. Racetrack and Apollo OMG, and Gunny Mathias (Hi!) notes mordantly that "their fracking resurrection ship is gonna overheat." Heh. Apollo calls in the dead -- thirty or forty in his line of sight, but not ours of course -- and Mathias sets up the perimeter. "Sharon," Apollo calls, but she's just staring around at all the bodies. "Athena! See what you can pick up with the computers." She puts her hands in the data port gel we've seen before; the screens all around command begins to flicker. "If I get a connection, put the SSR leads in the water over there. Reduce the error correction level for higher throughput." Racetrack marvels at the USB stuff Sharon can do, but more importantly wonders if it's a good idea. The screens go crazy; something comes up in Sharon. We don't know what it is -- she gasps -- and Hotdog asks if she's okay. Hotdog, who got hot;

Hotdog, who named her. "Uh, yeah... the datapoints are almost completely corroded. I don't know if I'm gonna get much out of here, but let's try." I'm not convinced that's why she's wiggling, but I'll let the suspicion slide for right now.

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Apollo spots a moving Six (But not [the dark-haired sort](#); I'm like so fascinated by that copy because I have a total fanboy crush on Six and I looooooove Cylons and that's how simple the world is -- and thank God because, coincidentally, that's precisely the amount of complexity I can deal with!) and screams just like Lee Adama. "Frack me! This one's alive! We've got a live one over there!" Mathias orders cover for him as Apollo wigs out that some of them are alive. He radios to Galactica, counting the living: five models. Helo asks if they're taking fire, and Apollo admits that they're in sorry shape. "Don't take chances. They make any threatening moves..." Apollo nearly grins: "Oh, you can trust me on that one." It's funny, but there's something underneath this, having to do with showing Helo's a really good guy, worried about the away team... stuff we already knew, basically, but it has its weight in the script this week.

The sick Cylons begin to pray. It starts with Leoben, of course: "Heavenly Father..." and then Six, of course, joins in. Mathias asks if they should kill them, and Apollo advises to hold fire for the moment. "Heavenly Father...grant us the strength...the wisdom..." Apollo's eyes practically cross. "What are they doing?" Sharon stares at them, stricken. She knows this one by heart. "... And above all...a measure of acceptance." As Sharon bends down to cradle a sister Eight in her lap, Apollo wigs. "Hey, Athena, what are you doing? Athena! Athena!" She's gone, holding them in her arms. "The strength...the wisdom..." Sitting in a circle of bodies, Sharon stares, shaking. The Eight below her looks up and focuses. "Traitor: Save yourself." She asks from what, and a Six joins in: "Get away from us. A beacon. We brought it aboard. Carried disease. We're infected." Sharon's jaw drops; her hands clench on her sister's shoulders. Mathias and Apollo begin the evac with a quickness. "Galactica, Apollo. We have a situation down here. The Cylons have been infected with a disease. We have all been exposed." Sharon stares down at her hands. Apollo: "We've all been exposed."



Credits; episode by Michael ["Six Degrees Of Separation"](#) Angeli. 41,420 survivors in the Fleet. In Galactica CIC, Cottle's telling the officers to quarantine the away team, and sterilize everything they touch, including the Raptors. Gaeta runs away, grateful for work I imagine, and Cottle tells Dualla there won't be any info on the length of the quarantine until he does their bloodwork. "You said they picked up this disease from a beacon?" Adama notes that this is coming from the Cylons, and Cottle tells him it's "always good to have the source of the pathogen," asking if they can bring that beacon aboard. Adama balks, protesting that they need to limit exposure, so Cottle asks for the sickies instead: the disease will be more advanced in their systems, and helpful in illustrating symptoms and life expectancy of the victims. Medicine is a cruel mistress. Adama asks how many prisoners he wants. "How many you got?"

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As Athena's Raptor heads back to Galactica, the sick basestar explodes behind them, freaking Apollo out even more. Gaeta confirms from CIC that the ship exploded, and asks if they're okay -- apart from possibly contracting a deadly virus so bad ass that it even kills robots. "Must have self-destructed. You guys are lucky you got out when you did!" Apollo rogers the sentiment, and then stares at Sharon, who's acting totally weird. In addition to the other thing, her reaction at the data port -- which might just be me being weird -- I'm now thinking that the last thing she did was tell the ship to kill itself. Which is intriguing, and merciful, but also wipes out any other survivors, the bodies of the fallen, and the beacon itself. Which should make diagnosis more difficult at the least.

In Baltar's cell on the basestar, he is again: naked. The first movement, apparently, of Beethoven's 14th Sonata (the "Moonlight" one, Adagio Sostenuto) begins to play. We're dreamlike and slippery, again, moving from his waking to his standing to a conversation he's suddenly having, with Caprica and Three: "How long have you planned to betray us, Gaius?" He laughs; they look at him in sadness. Three really was pulling for him all that time, wasn't she? Last week I was struck by the similarities between Three and Adama; the way her face went when she had to abandon the sick basestar, the way he's had to do so many times before. She's making that face now. And

Caprica, well, her heart is breaking: "You're only making this harder on yourself," she says. Like a pissed-off bossman. Like a schoolteacher. Baltar starts dancing his usual, listing all his wonderful accomplishments: Hera, the map to Earth... Three cuts in: "We know about the beacon, Gaius." Caprica's voice is shaky: "You knew it was out there. You knew it contained a deadly virus." He protests -- so weird to see him pull this shit and have it actually be true. But the really scary thing about Gaius Baltar is that as far as he's concerned, it always is. Caprica asks him, interrupting, if the virus came from Galactica; Three takes it to the next level: "Have you been in contact with them since you've been onboard? Or did you plan this before the evacuation of New Caprica?" Apparently even the Cylons know how bad they are at making Plans and sticking to them, to assume that the Fleet has anything like this amount of follow-through. Gaius makes puppy-dog eyes of sincerity and sexiness and speaks in an even, low tone. "This is a most profound misunderstanding. Uh, I had nothing to do with the virus or the beacon. Yes. Yes, I did discover it on the baseship. And I should have told you about it sooner, and I didn't. Um, because I thought, you know, you'd try and link me, you know, to the virus." Caprica and Three whisper secrets, fading back and forth to his ever-so-earnest face, suspicious and sad and getting angry. "Which is, hello, you know, what's going on right now. I was wrong, and it was a mistake, and I fully admit my responsibility. It will never happen again. And I hope you'll accept my most, uh, yeah, my most humble apology. On a brighter note, I have a working theory as to where this beacon may -- " And behind him, the Centurions arrive, steel feet on the floor, more and more of them assembled. "I'm sorry, Gaius," says Caprica, unable to look at him. "Things would have been so much simpler had you only told the truth," says Three, and explains he's going to get tortured now. If ever there were a time for a Chip Six fugue...

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There we go. Gaius lies on Six's chaise lounge on the beach, wearing a white suit just like Three's. There is a very interesting thing about Chip Six which is confirmed in this episode: she's never told a single lie. Watch. "Relax," she says softly. "Have a drink." He whimpers, gasping, at the pain he's going through now that he's being tortured in reality. "It's all in your head, Gaius. Pain, pleasure...They're just neural impulses sent to the brain.

You decide how to interpret them. They can be pleasant. Or unpleasant." Chip Six has about three different tasks to accomplish in this episode, and she does them all brilliantly. She's back to being my hero. In both the projection and the interrogation, Gaius screams. Three's got him hooked up to a pain device like in [Dune](#), with a volume wheel like in The Princess Bride. And she's turning it up. Caprica looks like she's going to puke. "I want it to stop, Gaius," says Three. And she does. She's got a fucked up sense of priority, but when I said Cylons are never cruel -- and wasn't that a long, wrong time ago? -- it was somebody like her that I was thinking of. Nobody's ever been so sure they're right. Except everybody else on this show... except Gaius, actually. "I don't want you to feel this pain. And neither does Caprica, do you?" She's crying, stepping back not of her own volition. "No," she chokes out, and from the edge of something big, tears in his eyes, exhausted, he looks up at her: "I love you." It's interesting. On the relationship level, you have somebody who broke up with somebody in a literally explosive way, and lived with a vision of them in his head for years, and he dated girls that looked like her, just like a Hitchcock movie, and when they got back together, they kept trying. I don't think he loves Caprica anymore; they're both completely different people now. I think he'd be better off if he figured that out, because he's really not bringing his A game here.

Galactica quarantine, Hotdog's getting on Racetrack's nerves hella bad. "Feel anything yet?" Shut up. "You didn't touch any infected skinjobs!" Shut up. "Kiss my infected ass." Shut up. Cottle enters and gives her leave to kiss his ass as she sees fit, but informs them no asses are currently infected. "Got your bloodwork back; humans are immune to the virus. You're all healthy." Everybody hoots and hollers and Apollo gives everybody a quick round of applause for being human before ushering everybody out. And everybody goes, except for Sharon, whom Cottle tells to stay put. Out in the corridor, Racetrack walks by Helo, and she would say something I think, if he weren't looking over her head, at his wife. He grabs Cottle, wiggling out. "No no no no no no," he says. "Please tell me she's okay." Cottle tells him Sharon's bloodwork isn't done yet, and Helo whines about how he's holding off because she's a Cylon so she goes last. And either Cottle's got a serious character arc coming up -- given the [conversation with Three](#) on New Caprica, that would

make sense -- or Helo's being a big old baby. He's allowed. He shouts back through the cleanroom door to her, where her shoulders are very small and her back is very bent: "Sharon? You're gonna be okay. Promise." She nods, scared; reminded of what she is and is not. Helo yells at Cottle, to find him the second there's anything, and runs off. And inside the cleanroom, Athena cries, possibly sick, probably dying.

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When's the last time we broke an act on Sharon? Interesting. Down in Galactica brig, Cottle picks a Doral for tests -- "He's the furthest gone" -- and takes him for testing. Proud Doral, shaking and pulling against his restraints even though he's the furthest gone. I guess Cottle was making more medical decisions, then: first the crew certified, then Athena, experimenting on the prisoner stock. I can see holding off on that shit.

On Colonial One, Cottle's expositing his findings to Roslin and Adama: He can't cure them, but he can keep them alive indefinitely: "I identified the virus. We know it as lymphocytic encephalitis. The disease is carried by rodents. Rats, mostly. But a couple of hundred years ago, humans developed an immunity. Now, I can create a simple vaccine that will dramatically reverse the effect of the virus on the Cylons, but, uh, they have an antibody in their blood which breaks down the RNA of the vaccine. So they will need regular, close-interval injections of the vaccine. Or they will die." Okay. Pause. The virus thing still makes no sense, but I'm sure that every word here is to shore it up anyway, answering questions before they're asked, and I don't really care about the nitpicks and whatever with this, because: They are robots. It is not up to me to figure out how the bodies and DNA of robots works. You tell me the story, you get to make up the rules, and I am not interested in halving my appreciation of your story by getting hung up on details you obviously think make sense. No blame on either side, just an appreciation for the fact that Cottle spit out all that 'babble in about five seconds, so let's get to the moral dilemma already and leave the fights to the gift horse people. Like Lee Adama: "Can I ask the ugly question here? Is there a reason to keep them alive?" Helo, jumping at this, stammers out quickly that they're good for interrogation: trading scary necessities against the finality of death. Adama agrees, trading a final ending for the ongoing conflict. Lee

protests that they won't talk: trading his flab for war. Roslin agrees with his sentiment, but allows as how they might talk if they don't know it's a stop-gap measure: trading the possibility of collaboration in any form for the hardline measure. These are your characters for the episode, so pay attention, because everything that happens develops organically from this one scene. They all stay on these vectors throughout: it's the way they combine that makes it interesting.

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"They prayed on the infected ship," Apollo says, fighting Roslin on the "stay alive by giving over intel" issue. "Karl's wife said it was something called the Prayer to the Cloud of Unknowing, whatever the hell that is." Two things here: number one, it's a reference to an old religious text, and you know how much I love those. It's about what you think it's about: the veil, or "cloud of unknowing," that exists between us and God's true will. (I'll spare you my thoughts on how that connects to the whole Cylon persona/vapor-condensation thing [the Hybrid](#) was talking about.) Its use here is pretty inspired, considering that Cylon existence, as could be inferred from a race of robots, is predicated on information: even their concept of reality is constellated in terms of moving information around, bringing last week's forest into this week's conversation and so forth. So to look beyond the veil, to see the place beyond resurrection, true death, and see only "unknowing," well, that defines God. You can look it up -- it's about as interesting as most old religious texts, which depends on you -- but here's the prayer that serves as prologue: "God, unto whom all hearts be open, and unto whom all will speaketh, and unto whom no privy thing is hid. [The very definition of Cylon existence, separately and together: there's no sense of privacy with the Cylon God because there's no such thing: the unique circumstances that brought about DEMAND LOVE were a mutation, that changed everything.] I beseech Thee so far to cleanse the intent of mine heart with the unspeakable gift of Thy grace, that I may perfectly love Thee, and worthily praise Thee. Amen." Asking for God to cleanse your very intent. That's huge, in the Cylon mindset. And the human one, sadly. (The second thing is: Sharon, Eight, Athena, Boomer -- she became "Karl's wife" the second she wasn't rhetorically helpful. Inside him and in the conversation, she can't be a part of this story Lee's telling.) "She said they only use it when they're facing an imminent death

that is final, no possibility of downloading." Which, Roslin points out, has no bearing: "Doesn't mean that one of them won't jump at a second chance."

In the Galactica interrogation room, there's Simon in chains. Simon is black, and he's chained up. I'm just saying. His speech is difficult, because he's dying. He halts and coughs and sniffs and chokes, but he keeps talking. "It infected everything. Baseship. Centurions. Raiders. Until we were finally abandoned by the other Cylon ships." Apollo asks why they wouldn't just put the sick basestar under quarantine and look for a cure, and Simon -- the one who voiced the consensus, remember, that there was no cure to be found in science; I thought at the time it was picoseconds of calculations being done by the Cylon as a whole, and he just voiced it -- breathes hard. "Fear of spreading the disease. They told us that there was a bioelectric feedback component to the pathogen. It corrupts how our brains manage our immune systems. If one of us dies and is resurrected, the disease will follow, infecting the resurrection ship and the Fleet." Wow, it was like Snow Crash; at least they brought it back to something like a biological basis. We've got diseases that fuck up brains and diseases that fuck up immunity; I'm sure we have at least one that does both. Maybe it's like [Huntington's](#). Simon spills that they were sent to the Lion Nebula by Dr. Baltar, and everybody goes nuts. Helo in particular, but also -- aww -- Gaeta: "Baltar? Baltar's alive?" At least he didn't call him Gaius, dude. Simon nods, as well as you can when you're wearing a leash and collar. "Baltar is on our baseship. He's helping us find Earth." Adama figures it out, that he's doing the same thing Gaeta did on Galactica, using the nav charts and the map from Kobol. Simon coughs, laughs, chokes: "We want a new beginning. Much like you." Find the one tribe you didn't already fuck over, and give it the -- what, fifteenth? -- college try, eh? Cool. I like this. The idea of the universe turning into a giant sequel of Cannonball Run where they race the robots for Earth was not the most exciting possibility last week, but this has potential. Cottle takes Simon back to the infirmary for his "cure," and as he's leaving, Apollo starts to laugh. Not a jubilant or very excited laugh, but a laugh nonetheless. Adama asks what the hell is so funny, and the horrified and proud little Adama explains: "I think I just thought of a way to solve all of our problems. To get rid of the Cylon threat for once and for all. We can wipe 'em out. We can destroy the



entire Cylon race."

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"Wipe 'em out," yeah? So I'm glad we're looking at this from a bunch of different angles, with due deference to like the sanctity of life. And before you freakin' email me, I'll remind you of something Abraham Lincoln said, which Moore has said more than once is a guiding principle for the show: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." With malice toward none, and charity for all. The categorical imperative says it's fine to commit genocide as long as you'd be happy to be on the other side of the line. But we'll get to that particular bizarre viewpoint in a second. Right now it's Roslin's office on Colonial One, where Lee is explaining his sickening but clever plan. "We jump to an area we know the Cylons use as a supply line, NCD2539. We stay there, exposed; we look as if we're spoiling for a fight. They'll send their Fleet. And where there's a Fleet, there's a resurrection ship. And once the resurrection ship is within our reach, we execute our infected prisoners. We bug out, the executed prisoners download into the resurrection ship, and with them, the virus." Roslin confirms that the virus would download to the new bodies, and Adama is very still and quiet about this. "Rescuers become carriers of the plague. Cylons themselves don't believe that they'll develop a cure." Well, Cylons are downers, Bill. But I think I see the logical loophole here, too: one of the main differences between the humans and Cylons has always been "network" v. "non-network." Adama's decree is that no computers be networked, because of the way the Cylons can get in; the Cylons' greatest fear, on the other hand, is having anybody cut off from the network: I think the resurrection ships are all connected, so this would work. Or, you know, whatever: the Cylons are scared of it, and they would know.

Roslin breathes, taking it in, feeling its edges: "Oh, my Gods. This could be the end of the Cylons entirely." Forever, notes Apollo helpfully. Helo speaks the hell up. "Genocide? So that's what we're about now?" Genocide or xenocide, raman or varelse.

(I'd say framing, but I'd guess you know that by now, and anyway: every war that ever happened in real life happened between humans, so it's not letting anybody off the hook. On the other hand, as a wise person on the forums noted, qua Hera, that the existence of mules still can't make a horse a donkey.)

"They're not human. They were built, not born. No fathers, no mothers, no sons, no daughters..." Helo gets taller, a little. "I had a daughter. I held her in my arms." Apollo notes that she was half-human, not a thing, a dangerous thing, like the Cylons. "This is our one chance to be rid of them," says Apollo, which is true. Helo's response piques Roslin: "You can rationalize it any way you want. We do this, we wipe out their race, then we're no different than they are." Which is still not the point, to me or to Roslin: "Captain, I respectfully disagree. The Cylons struck first in this war and, not being content with the annihilation of billions of human beings, they pursued us relentlessly through the galaxies, determined to wipe us out." Which is possibly bullshit and definitely a biased account, but what Helo says next is unmitigated bullshit: "They tried to live with us on New Caprica." She smiles at him, that one smile you are thinking of, the terrifying airlocky one: "... What did you say?" He stupidly repeats himself, and then Roslin gets so hardcore so fast I think we all might die.

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"You weren't on New Caprica. To my recollection, you didn't set foot there. So, out of respect for the hundreds of men and women on your crew who suffered through that snake pit, I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear that." She smiles and breathes and is terrifying and is right. "You would serve your Fleet well if you'd remember occasionally that the Cylons are a mortal threat to the survival of the human race." Still not the point. Helo bounces back after that unimaginable misstep: "I'm talking about right and wrong. I'm talking about losing a piece of our souls." Which somebody has said in like every episode, and remains true to this day. It's not that I love the Cylons so much, although I do, as that this main, central, crucial point keeps getting lost in the static: You have to deserve survival. You don't put [guns in the Temple](#), you don't [rape Boomer](#), you don't [force Cavil](#) to cut his wrists open on the ground for your own fucking enjoyment, and you don't [strap a motherfucking bomb](#) to your chest. And if you do these things, Adama was [right](#) all along: humanity doesn't

deserve to survive.

It's a kindergarten motherfucking sense of entitled, playground morality that assumes just because A is an asshole, B is blameless. It's possible for B to grow the fuck up and act in accordance with a stable morality, instead of leveraging their evil based on some kind of flimsy "Mommy, he started it" excuse. At the end of the day, A is not your problem, because A is not your responsibility. Your behavior is your problem, and what you did to excuse it, because you are the person in charge of you. There are a lot of unanswerable questions here, but that is not one of them, and somebody should have told these motherfuckers when they were younger, because now they are grown up and I am ashamed for them. Your personhood doesn't go in the closet until things get easier -- that's like the one thing I disagreed with Tigh about, down on New Caprica -- it's there all the time. You can't write your bullshit self a hall pass to be "your worst" or commit atrocities right up until the very second that things get perfect and awesome, at which point like a wonderful jackpot prize you get to be who you are "at your best," and how one of these days, you'll get to be that you. As soon as nothing bad ever happens, nobody ever calls you an asshole, and everything is perfect and quiet and still. I'm not saying don't "wipe 'em out," I'm saying be really damn sure you know why you're doing it, because that's the only question that matters. Fucking... be better. It's the easiest thing of the world.

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And the assembled leaders of humanity standing on Colonial One -- with the exception of Adama, who's never been so conspicuously silent and aware -- are not interested in hearing it. Which Helo realizes, and notes angrily: "So let's keep it on me. Yeah, I'm married to a Cylon. Who walked through hell for all of us ... how many times? And she's not half anything, okay. How do we know there aren't others like her? She made a choice. She's a person. They're a race of people. Wiping them out with a biological weapon is a crime against -- is a crime against humanity." And because not even Lee is this stupid, I'm going to give him a pass for the fact that both of them have worked themselves, at this point, into rhetorical culs-de-sac: "But they're not human, they're programmed." THEN WHOSE FUCKING HUMANITY IS IT A CRIME AGAINST? So not the point! This week --

the last two days -- have been really hard, thinking and talking about this stuff, watching people take sides, watching people so willing to exterminate the Other just in case. It's been frustrating. Because unstoppable robots on a killing spree is one thing, but that would be a stupid fucking show, and I wouldn't watch it, and I can't imagine why anybody would watch that show. If that were the show we were watching -- well, not "we," but you know what I mean -- then I'd say "Go for it! Kill 'em off! They're not people! This show is retarded!" Like: [Charmed](#) v. [Buffy](#): One of them you are called upon to look at both sides, the other you don't have to. But they are people, and this show is not retarded, and there are questions without answers, but this is not one of them. And I wouldn't get so grossed out about all this if I didn't think Apollo -- who's tremendously well-written in this episode, he's like the new Sarah Porter -- represented a sizeable portion of actual, current American view. Which is terrifying, and ugly, and scares me to death. Still. Because this is a viewpoint that's already given up on its own soul's worth, protecting a box with nothing left inside. Making zombies to carry the very best guns.

Man, I can't believe I got through both paragraphs without once mentioning Cally. ... D'oh! Roslin nods to Helo and Apollo: "We will take your input under advisement. Thank you both." That's Roslin for "I have a special file for people that disagree with me today." Apollo leaves with unctuous thanks and Helo lingers; a sympathetic Adama dismisses him. Alone, Roslin and Adama have the following conversation with just their eyeballs:

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**Roslin:** What day is it? **Adama:** Marsday? I think? **Roslin:** No, I mean the date. **Adama:** How come? **Roslin:** Because I was trying to remember... **Adama:** Oh, right right. Am I the guardian and protector of human morality this week, or are you? **Roslin:** Exactly. I really feel like airlocking some plague victims or stealing an election or something, maybe committing genocide, but I wanna be sure ... **Adama:** I think it's me? But I'm feeling meek, so... **Roslin:** Jesus, this system is fracked. Where the fuck is Tory? She has it on her Blackberry... **Adama:** Well, hopefully this decision will be taken out of our hands again this week, so we stay likeable and nothing huge changes. **Roslin:** I love it when that happens. Then I can make a speech and Jacob will cry! **Adama:** So say we all. **Roslin:** Word!

And then commercial. Coming back, Gaius is fading in and out of his naked torture and out and into his Six fugue on the beach, shaking silently as Three turns the pain higher, until he finally cries out. "I can help you," says Six. "I can guide you through the torment and beyond, but you'll have to do the work." Task One: Continue teaching Gaius how to project. I don't know why, but it's clear she needs him to learn this better with a quickness. Considering she's always played his intuition, it makes total sense no matter what she is. "I'll do anything," he gasps, and falls back into the basestar: "Anything!" Then tell us what we want to know, says Three, who's not doing half the job she thinks she is, as far as coming off as cold and clinical with this. "How was the virus invented?" Is there a cure? "Look at me," Six says, hauling him back to the beach. "Look at me. When you make love to me, Gaius, you don't always think about me. Your mind wanders. I know that. You think of equations, puzzles, your laundry." Projection, on the lowest level. On the basestar Gaius screams. "It's the nature of the mind to disconnect from the body," she says, climbing onto him. The waves and the birds and the bright sunlight. "Separate your mind from your body. Keep your mind in that room. Use your intellect against her. Reason. Logic. Analysis. Find the holes in her psyche." In the interrogation he begs, saying he can't, it hurts too much. "The pain's only in your body. So keep your body here with me. Don't worry. I'll take care of it." (Hoo hoo hoo!) This show is so fucking weird.

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Three turns down the machine again. "You see, Gaius, this is what the absence of pain feels like," she says, playing a role. "It's easy to forget." He repeats that it's not his doing, that it was a coincidence, and Three gets mad: "There's no such thing as coincidence. God wills the universe according to His design." (Wills. God wills existence. Just like a Cylon.) Six begins to undress, still straddling Gaius, still the one that knows him best: "Now. Focus on her. As a Cylon, not a woman. Be a scientist. Examine her faith. What's your analysis, doctor?" And as she starts to move, he starts to speak. "I'm a scientist. And as a scientist, I believe that if God exists, our knowledge of him is imperfect. Why?" He's speaking up at Three now, through bleary eyes. "Because the stories and myths we have are the products of men, the passage of time. Religion in practice is based on a theory, impossible to prove. Yet you bestow it with absolutes, like

there is no such thing as coincidence." Three answers, correctly, that this is definition of faith. "Absolute belief in God's will means there's a reason for everything. Everything! And yet you can't help ask[ing] yourself how God can allow death and destruction and then despise yourself for asking. But the truth is, if we knew God's will, we'd all be Gods, wouldn't we?" She darts her eyes at him. Interesting. She's always assumed a privileged relationship with God, invoking it without even thinking as she commits her crimes and administrations. "I can see it in your eyes, D'Anna. You're frustrated. You're conflicted. Let me help you. Let me help you change. Find a way to reconcile your faith with fact. Find a way towards a rational universe." Let me ruin your ideology and religion by accomplishing the impossible? No thank you. But she's a robot: it's the perfect, ultimate, most beautiful solution. And it would shut Cavil up, too.

"I don't know what your game is," Three says, "But it's not going to work. She shows him an electric prod. "You intentionally led one of our ships to that beacon, didn't you?" She shoves the prod into his ear, face on fire, he screams and heads back into the projection, where the torture table becomes a chair by the sea, becomes a bed where Six is making love to him. "Give your body to me. Only your mind is there. Feel me. Feel this, where she wants you to feel pain." (Creepy. S&M gives me the creeps. Michael Angeli co-wrote Chyna's autobiography, wrote the episode where Six/Shelly Godfrey beat the shit out of Gaius while pretending not to recognize him, wrote an upcoming episode entitled "The Woman King," and once offered a naked Demi Moore \$500 bucks to kiss him, in the middle of an interview. You tell me. Details unavailable at presstime, but he might well be the guy who invented Wonder Woman.) "Look at me. Look at me, Gaius. Do you want me to believe you're worth saving? Do you? Do you? Say it." Things are heating up in a sex way, as Gaius fades back and forth between the two beds on which two women are having their way with him, and as usual, he's completely powerless and thus blameless: "I want you to believe in me. Don't stop! Don't stop! Please, please don't stop. You have to believe in me. You're all I have left." Gaius and Six fuck, moaning and gasping; Three is stricken by his words: "Believe in me; you're all I have left."



Task Two: Make Three fall in love with Gaius, without letting him know that's what you're doing. Use his uselessness to your unknown angelic purpose; bring Hera and Gaius to bear on this woman, to bring her low and show her the power and the danger of love. "Now, tell me you believe in me. Tell me you believe in my strength." (Creeeeepy.) "Oh God," she moans, "Say it!" And, coming and going, jumping between worlds, he screams it. "I believe in you! I believe in you!" Three stares down at him, confused and moved, too much input from a strange little man. "I love you," he tells Six. His invisible girlfriend, the woman inside him that he can love completely, the woman shepherding him on and on. "I love you with all my heart." Three begins to weep, touching his face. He wakes up to the torture table. "... I love you with all my heart." In the room and on the beach, having finished up for the night, little Gaius Baltar falls asleep. Six collapses on top of him, spent. In the room, Three touches his lips and begins to weep. Okay, to be fair, that's a lot creepier on the page than it was to watch -- it was pretty cool to watch, and very intriguing. I should say that. Back on the beach: Chip Six grins like a girl with a secret, feathers sticking out of her mouth. Task two complete, and nobody the wiser. I think she's an angel of God for real, you guys: what is she but another kind of Hybrid? She might just save us all.

Galactica, Agathon quarters. The quite healthy Sharon is awesome: "... Cottle said it had something to do with carrying a half-human child, how the fetal blood cells enter the maternal circulatory system, causing the mother to create antibodies ... whatever. I'm immune!" I love that moment. "There was some kind of technobabble, but whatever, it worked. I got shot in the cancer!" ("New & Improved Baby Hera: She Shoots You In The Cancer!") Although I will say that it's not unproblematic: Motherhood changes you, but I get a certain undefined queasy ache in the feminism whenever [the baby gives you a soul](#), or makes you more human, or whatever. I don't know if I can parse it out exactly, but it's weird: Back when you just had a vagina and a uterus, you were still Other, but now that my dick's been in there, and my baby is in there, you're more... I don't know. Approachable. Like I said, not huge and probably just me, but it always squicks me out. I don't think a woman would write that storyline, is all I'm saying. Helo grabs her and they kiss passionately; Sharon -- sometimes she's a buzzkill -- brings up

their dead baby. "She's gone forever, and she saved my life. Hera kept us together." They continue making out, and Helo says quietly, breathing hard: "Share this." She smiles, going for his trousers: "This. ... You mean us? Together? You mean us?" She smiles, like: Do humans call it that? "Hey, baby, wanna share this?" but she quickly falls back down to earth. "Them, them. I mean them." Halfway there, she asks, but she knows: "Who's them?"

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"They're gonna execute the infected prisoners. But not until we jump into a Cylon region with a resurrection ship present." Athena begins to cry, laying her head on his shoulder. "The infection's gonna spread everywhere." Quickly, a logistics question: because I'm going with the physical representation of the Cylon as a network hubbed by the resurrection ships v. the open scattered radio of the Colonial Fleet, does... that mean he's asking her to kill herself? I know he'd do it, and it would be easy for her to download and jump in a Raider and come home -- assuming Starbuck or Kat aren't on the CAP, she'd probably make it -- but: is he asking her to kill herself? Or are they going to like, I don't know, email her antigens to them? It's weird. (Also, they already have Hera, and the only people that don't know that are Helo and -- probably but not definitively, and not for long -- Sharon. Making this particular line of thought just bleak and depressing enough to actually be on the show.)

Meanwhile, Adama and Roslin drink tea in his office; her feet up beneath her, body language easy and comfortable. "There's a point I'd like to make," says Adama. "The law forbids me to use biological weapons without a direct presidential order." Which, Roslin points out, means he's passing the buck. And yeah, that's exactly what he's doing. Covering his existential ass while not endangering their relationship by actively calling her out on yet another horrible, soul-sucking decision. "On this one, yes. Helo's right on one thing: we start destroying entire races -- even mechanical races -- we're liable to tear off a piece of man's soul." I think that parenthetical is purely for her benefit; I wonder how he would put it if Sharon were here, rather than freaking out upstairs with her husband. "The Cylons are coming to Earth. If they find us, they are coming for us. Those are the stakes. They always have been, Bill." All true. The right answers. But they're

the answers to the wrong question.

"We're talking about the genocide of your entire race," says Helo, and Sharon whimpers, trying to keep her back straight. "Yeah. You think I don't know that? I made a choice to wear a uniform. To be a person." He's only hearing about half of what she's saying, and blundering again: "You were a person before you put on that uniform. Okay? You were a person before I fell in love with you. You don't have to prove that." (White people, straight people, men, are that maybe ten minutes out of the day; the rest of us get to be what we are twenty-four fucking seven. I'm really not trying to be the whiny liberal this week, but you talk about what's handed to you.) "I have to prove it every day," she spits, angry. And calmer: "Let me tell you something, Helo. My people may die, my entire race may be wiped out. But this Cylon will keep her word, even if it means she's the last Cylon left in the universe." Categorical imperative satisfied, in the most warped possible way. I don't agree with Sharon, for once: you don't get to take the easy way out and define yourself this way. You'll always be both, one foot her and one there, and that's your strength and that's your glory, but it's also your sucky life. Grow up. Or maybe she's just as good at looking at her options as Helo is, and seeing the right way to be: with malice toward none, and charity for all. Won't kill or turn traitor to save their race, won't move to help the other side either. And that really is her sucky life, and I guess I forgive her.

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"Can a human being do that?" she asks, but if I wrote this script, it would have been Adama's next line, coming in off nothing in the transition back to his office. "... Can a human being do that? Posterity really doesn't look too kindly on genocide." (See? Double duty, referring to Sharon's speech but also bringing us back to his conversation with Roslin. The juxtaposition still works, though, because it's fresh enough that you can ask the question. And the answer is no, but not because humans suck, it's because it's a weird call to make, and would only make sense to a robot: Not A but B. She's no longer a Cylon exactly, but woe betide her for thinking it's that easy, for taking her Cylon logic and thinking they mean anything. Check out the other parallel here, also: we're jumping back and forth between Helo/Sharon and Adama/Roslin, and the conversations mesh well, but we're also

looking at Helo/Sharon and Six/Gaius: "This is how you become the Other. This is the psychology, the projection, the way you stay alive on enemy lines." The comparison between Sharon and Gaius became important the second he ran to Three's basestar, but now it's essential.) "You're making an assumption that posterity will define this as genocide. If they do, at least there'll be someone alive to hate us for it. The Cylons are our mistake, we created them." She delivers all her lines in the softest, most regretful tone this week. Like Caprica and Three, crying at the cruelty they must do. "All right, Admiral Adama. As President, I have determined the Cylons be made extinct. The use of biological weapons is authorized." He sighs. "So say we all." And she laughs softly, just like Apollo in the brig: "... So say we all."

NCD2539. Raptors and a Viper squad jump in, weaving through space, waiting for the Cylons to come. Back in the hangar bay, Sharon and Racetrack suit up. Another decoy mission.

Helo climbs through Galactica's innards -- what did they call those tubes and halls on Star Trek? Didn't they have a name? It's like that. He comes to a lockbox on the wall, like a breaker box.

Athena's Raptor reaches NCD2539. CAP is away.

Helo unplugs something, a multicolored printer plug.

After a bunch of waiting around, the full Cylon party jumps in. Including a resurrection ship, luckily -- has that ever happened with an engagement like this before? "Time to execute our cylon prisoners. Call it in," he gaetas, and Apollo and Mathias head down. Apollo requests headshots, as a measure of charity. (You dangle a cure, they beg to die so they won't infect their people, and then you yank back the cure -- which you lied about to begin with -- and kill them in just the right place. You use the sick and dying as a new kind of bomb. The grossness, the sin of this, doesn't just lie in xenocide. It's a perversion from start to finish.)

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NCD2539: A beautiful Raider battle takes place. Hotdog and Starbuck chatter back and forth.

On Galactica, Apollo and Mathias reach the end of the labyrinth down to the brig, and fight their way through the mysteriously

engaged deadbolts, finally enter the room with the Cylon prisoners. And they're already dead. Apollo shouts, and pouts, and mourns his chance to do more damage to himself. I don't blame him for any of this: he's hard, and he's coming back from suicide and worse. I don't blame him, but just because A is wrong doesn't mean B's okay. Apollo gaetas to Adama about missing the window, as a second baseship jumps in on Starbuck's CAP squad. Adama calls all the birds back, and they begin to spin up their FTL. Ships are destroyed that we don't see; Pilots die but we don't see it. So it's like it didn't happen. This fake battle that never should have happened, this feint to carry out abomination, and people died, and we'll never see them. Did Halliburton pick up the Viper contract? The Vipers land violently on Galactica, throwing sparks and bouncing heavily, and Adama orders them to jump back to the Fleet with a tiny little glint of "Fuckin' told you so" in his very intense eyes.

"They'll be coming for me," Helo says. He turns his back, upset. "You or me," he laughs. Sharon stares at him. He is... a murderer. The only soul he leveraged was his own. There weren't options, with the prisoners, for max charity, but they could have been given the cure, could have been made Spikes of, enslaved to the vaccine, waiting for their catch. Unable to ever go home. And that's the best option for them, barring somehow using Sharon's antigens to save them for good, at which point they'd be POW's and could just wait and kill themselves later, assuming they didn't get raped to death by the humans. Who sometimes do that. These are questions without answers. (Maybe that's all Helo meant and I imagined the other, horrible thing; in which case I am a horrible person and I do apologize for thinking it.) "Seems like they're always coming for one of us..." he muses. Always for the best of reasons, though. I remember Pegasus. "I'm not a traitor. I love my people. I love this ship. Besides you, the first thing I wanna see on any morning are the lights in that CIC. I did what I thought was right. If it was a mistake, fine. I can live with that. It's you I can't live without." The measure of salvation, in this case, being that we're no longer on New Caprica, so they won't have to kill him for what he did like Tigh with Ellen, the day she said just that. Sharon holds him, tightly, and their bodies echo that last atrocity. "I'll always love you, Helo." Just like Saul.

Adama offers Roslin tea in his office; this time she's not having it. "The prisoners died of asphyxiation," he explains. He neglects to point out that this is the first time in the history of the Fleet that the asphyxiation was not happening to his son Lee. I wonder if it'll happen again, now that he's gained himself all that weight and suffocated himself again and now he's over it? "The air purification system was reversed, sucked the oxygen out. When this happens, the deadbolts are automatically activated on the door. Someone did this manually." Roslin snorts at the "someone." "Seems to me there's only one or two likely suspects. Who will head the investigation?" And I guess it was Adama's turn this week, for the big forgiveness: "No one. I'm closing the book on this." She rolls her eyes -- "How convenient" -- but she knew he'd say that before his ass walked in. And somewhere she's grateful for Helo's action. For the way all their vectors combined and came up with a small measure of grace after all.

The story wasn't going to end, obviously, with the extinction of the Cylon. And the story wasn't going to end with everybody coming to what I facetiously call "their senses" when what I mean is "the same conclusion I did." So it had to be messy. People had to act in accordance with their feelings, with their guts. Every viewpoint balanced against every other viewpoint, checks and balances, resolving down to a simple precept: With malice toward none, and charity for all. If only Three knew how close her secret Helo came to fucking it up this round: if Gaius hadn't followed Six's instructions to the letter, he'd probably be dead. There was no other way this could happen, but it doesn't mean I'm not grateful, and it doesn't mean I'm not grateful to have seen it happen. Battlestar Didactica is a true and good and funny joke, and God knows we've all thought it, but I think its timeliness -- especially this week -- is better expressed in Cylon terms, in Hybrid terms, than ours: This has all happened before, and it will all happen again. And the choices we make, every time -- not just when we're on top and not just when we're getting screwed -- are the choices we live with, after the threat has passed away again.

Adama hands Roslin Cottle's report on the virus: "He thinks that it was simply an accidental contamination of the beacon we abandoned on the sick baseship." (Which somehow mutated, or carried within it, the strange RNA markers that made it Snow Crash and made it unfixable.) "Somebody sneezed, maybe," says Roslin, and they both chuckle. "Yeah," he riffs, "An entire race



almost wiped out because someone forgot to wipe their nose." Don't quit your day job for the Improv, baby doll. Laura laughs politely, both of them horrified, both of them whistling in the dark, and takes off her glasses. "According to Cottle, the virus was an exact match to one reported over 3,000 years ago -- right around the time that the Thirteenth Colony left Kobol." This is unnecessary, this is phlebotinum, feldercarb, fan service, hanging an unworking lantern on a confusing concept, except that it's not: "That beacon was a signpost to Earth," Roslin realizes. They smile and put their arms around the Lie of Earth, now becoming real. It's a load off your back to find out you're not actually dancing around as fast as you thought. It's a possibility of forgiving yourself for the things you've done and have yet to do: a sign pointing home.

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"I think we're on the right trail, Laura," and this is the last interchange we'll get this week, so let's think about names for a second. What he's saying is, "Do you forgive me for letting Helo off the hook?" And the answer is: "Yes. We are on the right trail, Bill." Yes. The answer is yes; they fill in each other's blind spots. But on Colonial One there's an office, and in that office there's a desk, and in that desk there is a drawer, and inside you'll find a piece of paper and a looseleaf diary, and on that paper is written "Olympic Carrier," and in that diary are written the names of the dead. And that's a burden for a democratic leader, not for the leader of the military. That's Roslin's alone. We're on the right track, but she reminds him: "So are the Cylons." Eddie swallows and looks at her, and they sit in the middle of two places. And it's not what she means, and they don't know it yet, and I don't know if we'll ever see it come true, but everything that rises must converge: The Fleet's on the right track. And maybe, so are the Cylons, a long ways off. If you can't believe that, might as well throw it in right now, because Mutually Assured Destruction is not an option and it never was, it's a bet. And if the whole thing's a game, sometimes you gotta roll the hard Six.

Boom boom boom. Next week: Dixon from [Alias](#) with awesome hair -- no Marshall in tow, but I've got fingers crossed -- and a secret that I think might change everything for good.

# SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 8 | Aired on 11.16.2006

*Hero* - A pilot from Adama's suddenly confusing past shows up and gets everybody all nervous and confused and mad, but some quick thinking from Roslin soon calms everybody down. Again.

**Recaplet:** Add one to the survivor count when a pilot from Adama's old command, the Battlestar Valkyrie, escapes from a Cylon basestar. It's POW Daniel "Bulldog" Novacek, played by Dixon from [Alias](#), and he has many secrets. Years ago, the Valkyrie was sent on a black ops mission to the Armistice line, possibly provoking the original Cylon attack on the Twelve Colonies. When Bulldog's Viper got too close, Bill shot him down and left him for dead in order to protect the Armistice. Good decisions with good consequences! Tigh gleefully sends Bulldog to tie up and beat Adama after letting him in on the whole shoot-and-run issue. It's only Starbuck and Tigh who look closely enough at the details of Bulldog's escape to figure out he was released on purpose to hurt Adama -- amounting to a motivation ironically identical to Tigh's. He makes up for it, though, by talking Bulldog down from several different flavors of ledge. In so doing, Tigh gets his swerve back, to the point that Bill calls him back into service as XO. Bill tries his best to feel bad about all this stuff -- shooting down a fellow officer while on a horrible creepy mission; possibly causing the genocide of the human race -- but between his son and Roslin both pointing out that he was following orders, and the medal Roslin pins to his chest, he decides on her orders to suck it up and keep going. Bill and Saul reconcile, and Saul begins to tell his best friend about how his wife Ellen died. Meanwhile on the basestar, yet more robot threesomes and weird religious epiphanies abound as Three goes even crazier than ever before and engages in several high-risk behaviors including sex with Baltar and Six and recreational suicide.

**Recap:** Bizarre graphic leading into the Previouslies, reading "In The Beginning..." Which translates roughly as "Hope you're not a nerd, because we're about to do stuff to continuity that not even the Japanese have invented. Check out these scenes from [the mini-series](#) on! Radical recontextualization to follow!" Not even Olmos's trustworthy voice-over is going to save you from

brainfreeze and heartbreak if this is the kind of thing that freaks you out. Speaking personally, continuity means nothing to the particular story at hand, not to mention that half the time, as we've seen, I can't remember the difference between, like, Caprica and Kobol. So but here's the rundown: Adama said that sometimes [history bites you in the ass](#) and we thought he meant how his family invented Cylons, but maybe there was more to it after all, and while he was thinking about this, Six was kissing hell out of the Armistice functionary guy, and then the Armistice station got blown to hell after forty years, and that's how everything started. Due to the war and annihilation, Adama was totally not interested at all in probing why these things happened. ("Armed and trained Afghanis to do our evil bidding? Surely you jest!") Later on, he kind of made up for, like, every mistake ever when he [beat up the entire planet of New Caprica](#) while mustachioed, but he was too late to save his BFF Saul Tigh -- who, it turned out, had become [full of bile and hatred and poison](#). And then Tigh totally threatened to commit suicide, but like people ever mean it when they say that, so Adama ran off and refused to stand up to [Roslin's nuttiest plan to date](#).

There's breathing and a heartbeat, and a sound like water, and we're on a basestar. We're in a cage, though, rather than a house of whoredom and/or creepy sex torture -- and the cage itself is not the disco kind -- so it's not Gaius. There's a flash of [Dixon](#) in the cage; it's he who is breathing. And he's crazy, also.

Tory and Laura have decided to officially ignore the Colonial Gang exposé on their lesbian affair, because until Giorgio Armani can give an eyewitness account of your heterosexuality as "neverending," you might as well ignore the problem altogether. Okay, that's a lie, but their clothing is sexy/casual and weekend-functional, because they are doing spring cleaning on Colonial One, and they're being, like, adorable. They agree to put Gaius's self-portrait over the john, which is a lady thing to do because they won't ever have to look at it, but I'm wondering: are they going to put the whiteboard up again? Have you ever noticed how Roslin's such a packrat when it comes to the morbid and depressing? She's like Winona Ryder in Beetlejuice: dead people, dead ships, the whole Sorrow And The Pity diary, the horrible whiteboard....Oh, look: the dossier Billy made her for what she calls her "first day aboard Galactica," which...we're not even going into that one, and Laura and Tory open it up and start

going through it. You know what I hate when it's cleaning time? ADD shit like that. "I'm just going to clean up this little pile here...oh, look! Six years of back when Sassy was good! And under that: Proust! Rad!" Tory, looking at a pretty fit picture of Adama on the CIC deck of the Battlestar Valkyrie, exposit that it was Adama's command before Galactica, and further that this year is the Admiral's forty-fifth in the Colonial Fleet, and finally that his commissioning anniversary is mere days from now. Roslin decides to throw a party for Adama and give him a medal, and she and Tory talk about how depressed everybody's been -- what with all this high-level black ops stuff that only like, ten people know about, while everybody else is just happy to be home, even in refugee camps -- so it'll be good to throw a party for Adama. Just like they do like every single week. One can only hope there will be an applause montage with adoring faces.

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Later, on the Galactica CIC deck, Helo's wiggling out and setting Condition One throughout the ship and he is not fucking kidding. Dualla tells Bill -- who I guess is late to the rodeo here -- that there are three Raiders nearby, CBDR -- Constant Bearing! Decreasing Range! Learning Is Fun! -- at bearing 145, carom 33. But, Helo explains, they're not in standard wedge formation, so it's so interesting. Starbuck and Kat are flying CAP -- wouldn't it be funny if the big lie was that Starbuck and Kat are always flying CAP, not because they're really unpleasant and/or scary people, but because they're the "best pilots in the Fleet"? -- and the most awesome part, Helo grins, is that it's two Raiders chasing a third. Which is so confusing, because they're not firing on any of the Vipers -- not to mention the Raider they're chasing, but we don't know that yet. Starbuck, as always with Raiders, wants to climb up their asses, and Kat is like, "But why are they..." and Starbuck's like, "Don't know, don't care, kill crazy." She tells Kat to wait to engage until they get closer, so it'll go faster, and they do, and then it does: the shortest space battle of all time. They take out the two chasing Raiders with like one spitball and a mean look, and then go to take out the last one, which is suddenly headed straight for Galactica.

Over the wireless, there's a Colonial pilot yelling, "Krypter krypter krypter! This is Bulldog. Get me the hell out of here. I'm wounded!" Starbuck and Kat decide to blow up the Raider

anyway, and there's a lot of back and forth, and the message getting clearer, and Adama gets very quiet and very still, and duallas to the CAP to cut it out, and then helos for an escort for the Raider: "Prisoner drill. I want the alert guard in the hangar deck in five minutes." Helo and Gaeta OMG at each other for a long time, because normally this kind of shit only happens when Starbuck gets bored.

Down in the hangar deck, Chief is yelling lots and lots, and there's a very ominous shot of the Raider, chained, being pulled into the bay, Marines all around, the Raider's eye gone dark. Starbuck and Adama stare at it together, and suddenly, it starts, like, violently leaking all that gross biology they have in there, and then the hatch opens and Bulldog falls down onto the deck. And he is just disgusting, covered in that stuff. Adama, Starbuck, and some Marines approach guardedly, as Bulldog stands; he then salutes. Adama salutes back. If you know Adama at all, you already know that something is going really haywire in his brain and his feelings right now, but that's just because. The violins go crazy and Starbuck's eyes bug right out as recognizes the Admiral. "Is it really you, sir?" asks Bulldog, and Adama nearly smiles but not quite: "Yeah...it's me. Welcome home, Bulldog."

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Credits: 41,421 survivors, which is one more than last week, which is Bulldog. So far Helo's turncoat bullshit respect for his humanity and soul -- and those of, um, everybody -- has had a deadly effect of negative one. ["I didn't edit that recap, but let me just say retroactively: shut up, Helo. Either you're in a war or you're not. God. You want to hug and kiss some poisonous Cylons, resign your commission and join the Colonial Peace Corps." -- Wing Chun] Flashback to Admiral Corman's office, back before the war. Corman's telling Adama that they'll never have "this opportunity" again. What opportunity? Hmm. "I'm assuming you appreciate the consequences if you're discovered," Adama is told. "And you understand, Commander, that this conversation did not happen." Such awesome things happen after that line. Always. It's in the WGAw rules. "This conversation did not happen" leads immediately to tax deferment, fro-yos, and free education for everybody. Adama says of course he knows about the conversation not happening, but requests his men for the mission, especially for something called the "Stealthship,"

which...I'm not sure. Either it's, like, a special Viper, or it's the name of a Viper. All through the episode, I thought it was called the Stealthstar, which would make it a bad-ass class all its own, and would make a certain amount of sense in context, but no dice. And also, there's only "one pilot" he trusts to fly it, and Corman says "Who?" but we both know. It's clearly Starbuck.

Just kidding! It's the proto-Starbuck, who is Bulldog. With whom we are, in the Galactica med lab, where Cottle is -- is he? -- yes, yes he is. He's checking Bulldog with Gaius's Cylon Detecting Apparatus. Which is awesome, because the only time it's malfunctioned is [when Gaius lied about Boomer](#), and um, that robot chicken has flown the robot coop, so I'm glad they're using it. I would like to see that conversation over tea with Sharon: "Oh, that thing? Totally works. My bad. That was...a liliitle bit before I shot you. Just a tad. Bet you wish it worked better, huh?" Oh, how they'd laugh then. "The conspiracy theorists are gonna be disappointed," Cottle grumps to Bulldog. Please. The conspiracy theorists don't care about Bulldog. They just want Lee and Kara back together. Cottle: "We've checked your DNA signature against your military records, and it's conclusive: you're not a Cylon." Bulldog's like, "I've been not being a Cylon for three years. In a tiny cage, doing pushups." Cottle crustily offers Bulldog a smoke, and Bulldog stares at him like he means crack, so Cottle shrugs and pops the cigarette into his mouth like delicious candy. I totally want a cigarette, so hang on. You can thank Doctor Cottle: It's so rare that people smoke on TV now that I've lost my defenses. Meanwhile, Adama's having a secret loooove conversation on the phone in the corner, which is totally all about Bulldog, who is totally sitting right there, which is totally rude. Roslin's like, "Bring his POW ass up here," and Adama is more than willing. "Whatever they did to him out there, they kept him fed and relatively healthy," says Cottle. Where's the crusty downer he always supplies? That was almost sunny! "...Physically, anyway." Right, there we go.

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Up in Adama's office, Bulldog is eating noodles faster than Lee, even. Adama's like, "I appreciate the noodle love, and your POW status, but could you tell me what happened?" Bulldog becomes awesome, and ever so Original Girl Starbuck: "Well sir, it's like this. The enemy had me locked in a cell for three years. The



accommodations were lousy, the service was slow, and after a while, I felt the institution no longer had anything to offer me. So I left." Seriously, that's all it took, I was like, "Bulldog is awesome! Please do not give him a fake daughter!" Adama then gives a sigh of profane relief: "Thought maybe the Cylons had beaten the bullshit attitude out of you." (Sometimes silent-bleeped, sometimes no. I say the more graphic depictions of sex and violence and words like "shit" we get on cable TV, the sooner we stop beating savage American drums around the taboo fetish God of Ignoring the Actual, and admit what we, as adults, already know to be true in reality. The kind of people who would phone their congressman at the word "shit" or having Gaeta mack on a dude don't deserve to watch this show anyway.) Bulldog laughs, and Adama cracks a smile, but then takes a stiff drink and asks again: "How'd you get out?" Bulldog starts shaking and quaking and sweating, saying that all the Cylons had a virus. Which, um, they didn't. And I like how right away that starts to fall apart. "I heard them say it was spreading, getting worse. But eventually I realize...I'm not catching it. I'm immune." So he was smart and patient and waited. But why isn't he helping the tortoise?

Bulldog's doing pushups; Three clangs a prod against the bars. The camera moves mighty strangely, like a miscopied document. Three chuckles and needles Bulldog about why he's exercising all the time: "Are you trying to stave off getting old? Doesn't seem such a tragedy to me. Given the alternatives." She sniffs, and we see her, and she is WAY fracked-up and sick-looking, clanging the prod along the bars. Of Bulldog's cage. When in doubt, and you've got a cage or a shock collar to spare, why not shove a black guy or Korean chick inside? Makes the point, not that anybody's listening. "You know what I'm saying?" says Three. "Do I look that bad?" She really, really does. She's like if you gave Sarah Connor 1991 some like serious Hep C. She looks like that lady that lives in the mountains in Japan. Three: "You know what I think? I think you're afraid." No she didn't! Bulldog stands up quickly and punches her in the nose through the bar; she screams and falls down, dead, face all nasty and hematomeriffic. No he didn't!

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"Let me try and understand exactly what happened to you. I'm just gonna go back a little, all right? About a year prior to the

Cylon attack on the Colonies, you were on a mission with Admiral Adama. Is that correct?" Roslin watches Bulldog look at Adama, watches Adama nod at Bulldog, watches Bulldog look back at her. Watches clearance happen. "It was a black ops mission." She gives the beloved hmm and crosses her arms, nodding. "You remember the Tauron Colonists were such outlaws, always pushing their luck with the Admiralty every chance they got?" (Not for nothing, but we've only met [one](#) I can think of. And fuck yeah.) "The Taurons were drilling for tylium ore on a moon that was too close to the Cylon Armistice line. We knew that they had to get out of there, or risk provoking the Cylons." Roslin nods at Bulldog and Adama, but Tory's a gisty kinda gal: "I'm sorry, but how did this result in his ship being shot down?" Instead of yelling about context and the bardic tradition, Adama explains that Bulldog was the recon pilot: "He was there to gather evidence. Taurons must've seen us coming, because they ambushed him." Lie #1. No, #2. Roslin looks very fucking closely at him but doesn't say anything. You know she's thinking, "Oh, Bill. I'm the guardian of human morality this week?" And she is, and it's awesome as usual. "Lieutenant Novacek was shot down by the Taurons in cold blood," Adama lies. And by the way, Edward James Olmos is a fucking brilliant actor in this episode, which is relatively unmeaty. He's amazing. Every time the camera is on him, starting now, he makes me want to cry. He's just so...deeply embarrassed. Like, on a spiritual level. It's so sad. How can any of us survive, unless the man at the top finds a way to forgive himself? I understand why it's him -- why logically it has to be him -- but it makes me sad. I don't talk a whole lot about how much I love Bill Adama, and honestly, that is one of the good things about Bill Adama. Response to this episode has been mixed, but given where it falls in the season, I'm just grateful for this: it's another way for Adama to be forgiven. He's just given so much already. And all he has to do now is truth, and reconciliation. All he has to do is speak.

Flashback to the very sexy Valkyrie CIC, and its very sexy crew, as we hear a strangely familiar refrain: "Krypter krypter krypter, I've got damage to the port engine. Bird is down. Repeat: bird is down. Request rescue. Krypter krypter krypter! This is Bulldog...bird is down. Repeat: bird is down. Request rescue." Repetitive? There's a reason, but we're not there yet.

"So what did you do?" Laura asks Bill. But they're not alone: "I made a bad call. His ship was gone. No ejection on dradis. No distress call. He was dead. So I left." Tory wows: "But the Lieutenant did eject, obviously, and somehow survived in his ejection seat long enough for the Cylons to find him." She's mostly wowing and a little bit going "For REAL?" She is so good! She says more in one line than most of them are allowed to say in five, but they're all that good, and I'm not complaining, because these scripts are already short enough. Roslin gives some classic motherfucking Roslin: "Could you both give us a moment, please, thank you, Tory, and thank you very much, Lieutenant, I appreciate it." All one sentence like that, you know how she rolls. She is strange and unusual. Tory leads Bulldog out with the dubious delights of checking the Fleet registry for the paltry if extant survivors of his family line. He's like, "Awesome, did you know every single human died?" but something is better than nothing. Bulldog leaves with sweet Tory...

...and Roslin looks at Adama sweetly. He is sad beyond belief; he's the kind of self-hating sad that only Kara usually gets to be. "So are you gonna tell me what really happened?" asks Roslin. He looks down -- not because he doesn't respect her, but because he's afraid of losing her respect: "You're gonna have to trust me on this one, okay? It's my mess. I'll fix it." Bill stands, at attention; Roslin finally, unwillingly, leaves. Alone, Adama stares around. And then beats up a chair. You don't think to worry about him, you don't worry about the hits he takes, because he's strong: that's what he does. You don't think about what this takes out of him. I know it's just a one-off in the middle of a half-season of two-parters and To Be Continued, but this is real: you don't think about the hits he takes until they remind you, and then it hurts.

Three walks through the Galactica corridor, wearing D'Anna drag. I have this weird issue with the name "D'Anna," because I think it's the name of somebody who's got a sister named Misty and a brother named Forest -- and people named D'Anna and people named Misty and people named Forest are categorically terrific and classy, so don't email me -- but it's completely regional and completely personal when I say I hate the name D'Anna. And one thing I despise about this very nice little episode is the fact that I kinda have to call her D'Anna from now on, because Bithya-Three still sounds like a speech impediment. I'm not going to worry about it this week. Three walks through the Galactica corridor,

wearing D'Anna drag. Marines follow her down the hall, and meet her coming. She turns a corner; there they are. She backs up and sees another set. She backs up; a Marine pulls a gun. She runs to a hatch. It reads "END OF LINE"; and...if they box Three because Lucy Lawless has a high quote, I will go berserker crazed. I mean it. Marines come in from both sides, and Three gets scared; the Marines assemble around her. And here is what she -- standing before a hatch that reads "end of line," a phrase I was told meant nothing -- says: "Fire." And they do. They do. Three awakes from the dream, shaking and confused. But it's okay; she's in Gaius's cell. Naked. Sexy naked. In a large four-poster bed. With Gaius. Sexy Gaius. And also...a Six, who needs no "sexy" before her name. And the music goes like this: "Chip Six Crazy Music...Cisum Yzarc Xis Pihc...Chip Six Crazy Music...Cisum Crazy Xis Chip..." like a crab canon of sexy robot in a math I don't know yet. And there in the bed, naked as all get out, is a Six. Threesomes for real! With robots!

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Three sits up, stares at nothing, goes a little bit crazy, and heads for the wall, where a robe is waiting to cover up her even-hotter-than-you-thought hot bod. So that's three possibilities, and let's consider them: is this Chip Six in bed with them? No, because Gaius is unconscious and they use that music all the frackin' time. Besides, Chip Six wants Gaius to break Three: any amount of Three-breaking he can do is already done, because his ass is out cold. And I'm sure it took hours and hours. Is this some random Six? I don't know what the point of that would be. Is this Caprica? Well, she's covered in red satin like Chip Six, in the form of Gaius's incredibly tacky pimp linens. But also: what does Gaius get out of it? He's not just a dirty bastard: he only has sex to prove a point. You have to have all kinds of stuff to be a player that he does not have: he's just a little kid. It has to be Caprica because it's just Caprica that he's focused on, and this is in some way a punishment. Whether or not it hurts her, which to a narcissist doesn't make sense anyway, because Gaius Baltar's psychology is based on projection.

Less sexy: Tigh's quarters, where he's bringing a lit cigarette into and out of his line of sight; his one good eye. In and out. In, and out. "I see it. I see it. I see it." What does he see? It or not it. He's in bed with ghosts, and one eye sees fine and the other doesn't.

He doesn't wander out into the corridors with his boxers at his ankles, like last week, but it still makes me sad. All that time he was loving Bill, before and after Ellen died, he was working for the hope of Bill to come and save him again. It's something I've made fun of before and will again, but the facts are these: Saul knew Bill would save him; Saul killed Ellen because that would happen more likely than anything else. Nobody should have to make that choice. Because his worldview depended on those who were with Bill, and those who were not. He took that universe with him back up into the sky, and called it the Circle. He was right, when he killed Ellen, that the world would be like that: what he discounted was his influence on that universe, and the fact that he would make it that way because he couldn't find his own way out. It was true because he made it true once he was back in the Fleet so he was right all along, but that doesn't stop him being right all the same. He murdered her, and I agreed and agree with him for doing it, because he knew what the world up there would be like, someday -- and someday came, and he killed her. In fear of the world he created. This plays throughout: Tigh couldn't imagine a better world in the Fleet, back on Galactica, so he killed Ellen to save her from a fantasy. While doing everything he could to save the world for Adama. Tigh makes more sense than everything: he couldn't see a world beyond his fear, and rage, and courage. He is beautiful, for making the best choice he could in the world he saw, and the world he foresaw: he is beautiful because he saved Ellen from the Circle.

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The other eye is not quite the pirate patch [Strega](#) wished for, but what it is is fucking horrible. And in walks Bill, without knocking, in uniform. Tigh's best friend, who told him otherwise, who is letting him in on the episode, who needs to be forgiven. Who needs the obvious forgiveness of his obvious forgiver: "Daniel Novacek just escaped from a POW cell on a Cylon baseship, stole a Raider, flew it here. I just finished debriefing him." All one word. Tigh doesn't look up: "Bulldog's alive?" Saul stands, because that's fucking awesome. "That tough son of a bitch, he actually made it, didn't he?" And Bill acquiesces, and he's very whatever, and finally Tigh gets it. And you know, I give him credit for being shitty about it; because we know what it was like on New Caprica, he gets the pass. But also this: Bulldog = the Fleet. Bulldog is New Caprica in human form, and by existing, he accuses. Tigh:

"So...are you here to talk to your friend? Or to your XO?" Because the four months of occupation have so little to do with it, no matter what else. "Last time I checked, I was neither." Adama takes a drink and looks at Saul guiltily. "Ohhhhhh," says Tigh. The Starbuck before Starbuck; the Starbuck before that. The one you'd always save, except you couldn't save me. And you didn't save her. And you didn't save Bulldog, before her. "I get it. Oh, yeah. Oh, this is gonna be a little complicated for you, isn't it, Admiral? You gonna tell him what you did?" Adama protests that he just did what he had to do, and Tigh pushes him to just tell the truth, then, and Adama sidesteps in a way he doesn't normally do out loud: "It's not gonna make any difference. The past is the past." Which is something a teenager says, and Tigh calls him out for equivocating. Adama totally runs away from all this mess, and Tigh calls after him that Bulldog's going to find out sooner or later. Alone, Tigh goes back to the cigarette game. "I see it..."

Commercial, and then Tigh wakes up, a bandage over his eye, and walks slowly around his tiny room, pulling a dress of Ellen's down from the shelf and caressing it. He remembers kissing her, and remembers crying over her dead body. He's weeping when Bulldog comes to his door, and Bulldog won't go away, just knocks louder and louder. Tigh finally puts the dress up and answers the door. Tigh and Bulldog embrace, and immediately get to drinking. Remember when Tigh's alcoholism was, like, a bad thing? Like the thing: you old drunk. And now it's like you'd pour for him. That's so intense.

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Meanwhile, Adama has sent for Lee, and is very tentative and weird when his son arrives. "Thank you for coming. Sit down. It's time for us to talk."

Bulldog asks what Tigh's whole pirate/hermit deal is all about, and Tigh will only say that he's "been a little under the weather." Bulldog introduces yet more continuity weirdness into the situation, asking how Adama wound up on "this old bucket," and "what happened to the Valkyrie," which doesn't jibe exactly with the sense I've previously gotten of Bill's relationship with the Galactica, which relationship would be shorter than three years by this reasoning. But maybe it's our fault for assuming in the first place, I guess. "Let's just say that last mission wasn't exactly



a boon to the old man's career. Galactica was his graceful retirement." Why have this in there? I guess it establishes the timeline insofar as having Six already right up in Gaius's infrastructure by then, so there's no way Adama did what he thinks he did? But that makes this episode suckier, not less sucky. Bulldog asks why Tigh and Adama aren't talking: "What's wrong? He won't cover your ass day and night like he used to?" HA! Seriously, dude. "Oh, no, he still does his share of ass-covering. Problem is, it's his main function now. Of course," Tigh dangles, "considering how you wound up getting captured in the first place, I guess you found that out the hard way yourself, didn't you?" Saul Tigh: Also Not Helping The Tortoise. He then turns into Sabrina the Teenage Bitch. "OMG he didn't tell you? He didn't tell you. I can't believe he didn't tell you! I thought he was going to tell you! But he did not!" and finally Bulldog is like, "Fuckin' what, dude?" And Tigh's response? "OMG I'm so disappointed. That son of a bitch! Dang! Why didn't he tell you!? I can't believe he didn't tell you!"

Meanwhile, in Adama's office, there's a whole other vibe that is not irritating, as Adama explains the thing that he didn't tell Bulldog, doing so without fanfare: "I shot him down." Lee goes to that special Lee Adama place: "Well, if you shot him down, you had your reasons. You were following orders. Preventing something worse. Right?" Grrrross. Adama clarifies that he did it to avoid detection: "Protect the mission, so it wouldn't be discovered by the Cylons. It was a black ops mission whose sole purpose was to ascertain the likelihood of a Cylon strike." ["Duh? What I don't get is the notion that Bulldog wouldn't know he might end up getting shot down for that exact reason. Maybe I've just seen Fail Safe too many times." -- Wing Chun] Lee's jaw drops as the world reshapes itself around him: "You're saying that [we knew they were out there](#)? That they could launch an attack on the Colonies?" Well...nothing for sure: "There were theories in some circles that the reason that the Cylons had stayed dormant for so long was because they were building a war machine. Preparing a strike." Other circles, of course, assumed they were knitting cute hats and mittens. The received wisdom that the Armistice was completely silent for forty years is only partially true: "The Admiralty had grown restless with the Adar administration. They thought we were resting on our laurels, unprepared to protect against an attack." (Not to mention the

Lockheed "We Never Forget Who We're Working For" Martin contracts.) "My mission was to escort a stealth recon ship just beyond the Armistice line, stick our nose over, gather evidence, see if there was any suspicious activities." So if they got caught, Lee figures out, the Cylons would see it as an act of war. Which, um, is exactly what it is.

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So, in flashback, we see all this: Bulldog edges past the Armistice line, and although his ship is called a, or the, "Stealthstar," he registers on dradis. Which is stupid. Two clicks past the line: "Negative dradis contacts. There's nothing here, sir. Which is fine by me. Company wants to pay me for a joy ride, they came to the right driver. Helluva moon." Immediately, an "unknown vessel" jumps in on Bulldog, and we hear it again: "Krypter krypter krypter, I've got damage to the port engine. Bird is down. Repeat: bird is down. Request rescue. Krypter krypter krypter. This is Bulldog." The vessel jumps away again, and Bulldog is calling krypter, and then two more Raiders jump in. Adama is frozen, overwhelmed, scared, staring at his Captain's hands, not talking, not moving. Tigh whispers his usual: "Don't do this. Think about it, Bill. You don't want to do this..." but Adama is galvanized: "Do you want his ship discovered? Do you know where we are? Do you have any idea what this could mean?" ["I'm saying!" -- Wing Chun] Twenty seconds before the bogies hit. Adama finally pulls a phone to Weapons: "Launch ship-to-ship missile. Now." And they do. And maybe it hits -- I think it hits -- and Bulldog ejects.

In the present, Bulldog screams at Tigh, but Tigh's not having it, and lays down some more salty sea dog rhymes on him: "Oh, it's true, and you know it's true. You've known it every second of every day since it happened. And the sooner you admit it, the sooner you might get that haunted look out of your eyes." Bulldog lunges, off on Tigh's mission of whatever, but Tigh grabs him: "Listen to me. Sometimes surviving can be its own death sentence. I know that." And the other half, which is that when somebody breaks your heart, or sees you being vulnerable, sometimes you have to hurt them for not saving you. They have to be smaller. Tigh and Bulldog stand looking at each other until Bulldog finally takes off.

Lee: "So the attack on Novacek's ship -- the one that winged him

and the two dradis contacts that were following him -- they weren't Taurons. Those were the Cylons." Adama says that he told himself for years that it wasn't true, but that he was lying for a good long time about it. And that fits perfectly with him: "I was just lying to myself, pretending that it couldn't be true. It is true." He pauses, almost in tears: "I started it. Initiated it." But because Lee's always been about the easy answers, never more so than after the occupation of New Caprica, he's not having it: "Wait a minute, started what? Started what?" The attacks on the Colonies: "By crossing the line, I showed them that we were the warmongers they figured us to be." Bill begins to cry: "And I left them but one choice: to attack us, before we attacked them." But because Lee's always been a little stupid, he can't handle the idea of shared blame or context or ethical gray areas, he just yells denials: "No. No. Because it wasn't just you. They put you there. They put you there, across the line. You had no choice. That was the Admiralty. That was the -- that was the military. You were one mission. You were one man. One man." Ugh. But Adama is immensely touching in response, quiet and still and very sad: "It only takes one." And Lee looks at his father, breaking, and watches him stand, and stares at nothing, and begins to weep. It's not just Saul who counts on him; not just Lee, either.

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In the basestar command, Caprica approaches Three with an Eight nearby: "You all right?" Three says she is, but she's lying. "More nightmares?" asks Caprica. Three corrects her: "Dreams." But there's something different this time, somehow: "I think God's trying to tell me something." End of line. "It's about Gaius, isn't it?" These two ladies, these two women trying to figure out the heights and depths and complexities of love using Gaius Baltar as a model, stare over at Gaius, who stands with Doral and a Six near a water wall. He cleans up so damn nice. "No," says Three, almost surprised. "It's about something much bigger than that."

Before this, or after it, or concomitant with it -- I'm not a Cylon, I just crush a lot -- Three speaks to a hidden someone, and this is what she says: "After you execute this command, you'll delete the order from your logs, then overwrite the corresponding memory locations." Swing about on a Centurion, tucked into a corridor niche. And Three is terrified by what she's about to do.

Eyes wide, unblinking, she speaks one last word: "Execute." And he does. He does. The Kobol music I love most in all the show starts up as Three is dying; Three stands in the same great hall where Gaius and Six first saw Hera. Behind her are six white flags, floor to ceiling; five beings stand before them, bathed in light. Three is on New Caprica; Three is in a Caprica parking garage; Three's body lies in blood from a moment ago; Three falls in love with Hera, down on New Caprica. Three looks around the great hall in wonder, and draws close to the five figures, who are too bright to see. With tears in her eyes, she reaches out to take one bright hand. End of line. She dies, and dies, and dies again to return.

Three awakes gasping in a resurrection chamber, attended by the usual -- Six, Five, Eight, and Three -- and the Eight is guiding her through it: "It's okay. It's okay. Relax, try to breathe through it...breathe." Covered in goo and fluids, looking like a Hybrid, Three looks up at the attending Three. The Three above is hard, and cold, and perfect. New Three: "Oh, there's something beautiful! Miraculous, between life and death." The Three above is disgusted and worried; everybody looks around at everybody else. Six and Doral, as usual, are worried. Three stares at something fading up above her, something she already wants to see again; stares up, stares up, stares up.

Starbuck is watching tape of the CAP battle, with the three strange Raiders. It only takes a little while for her to notice that they keep missing. As though it's intentional. The violins go crazy as Starbuck pauses: a missile going well too astray. "Frack," she says, and stands, and goes to the one person she can trust.

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Bulldog, now questionable again, exercises in his cell on the basestar; in his quarters on Galactica. Finally he growls, with purpose, staring out at the camera. A cat's paw. You can count his masters as they multiply. Adama's phone rings, and Bulldog asks to speak to him: "I need to see you right now." He knows Danny knows, Bill knows that, but he also knows he's Bill, so death or high water you know what he's going to say: "I'll be right there."

Kara and Saul in the common room, laying out screen shots from

the video: "The Cylons are saddled up on him. They've got a perfect, point-blank, no-deflection shot. They had him dead to rights." Tigh's confused, but sees her destination from here. Starbuck: "Novacek was hit and smoking, flying straight and level. Any nugget could make that kill. The Cylons could've wasted him any number of times, and they didn't. They didn't. They let him escape." Saul takes a big drink and notes that Cylons do nothing by accident. "Yeah, that's what I was thinking too," says Starbuck. "Did Novacek say how he was able to overcome the Cylons that were holding him prisoner? They were sick? Had a virus? I mean, how many viruses do the Cylons have, sir?" Maybe it was the virus from before -- and the fact that Tigh doesn't know the whole story shows how high-level the whole Helo/Roslin issue really was -- "the same virus those Cylons we found were suffering from." Or else, Kara says, they went with a story the Galactica would buy. She keeps talking as Adama comes near to Bulldog's quarters: "Novacek was held on a baseship for three years, escapes, and then conveniently finds our Fleet with no agenda and no reason to be here."

Adama arrives at Bulldog's door, hands open: "Hey, Dan." Bulldog bashes him in the face with a steel pipe, throws him across the room, straddles and hog-ties Adama with his belt: "It's funny how all the training comes back, huh?" He holds the pipe across Adama's throat, bringing him low. Making him small. "Why did you lie to me, Bill?" Adama nears passing out, and Bulldog relents for a moment: "All those years...you know what I kept telling myself? What stupid, fracked-up dream I held onto? I kept thinking, 'Just hang in there, Bulldog. Bill Adama's coming. He won't leave you to rot in here, not him. He won't leave a man behind. Just hold on.'" We build our worlds around things. Rules. Structures. Human psychology is based on projection. You think Bill will come get you, you think there's somebody with answers, you think there's fairness in the universe, and when that goes away and you don't have any easy answers, you feel small. Again with the pipe: "But you weren't coming. You didn't think I was alive. You weren't even hoping I was alive!" Bulldog is the colony of New Caprica, is Geminon and Sagittaron, Scorpion and Caprica, is the Olympic Carrier and Maya, rising to speak. He is Billy Keikeya.

Flashback to the dead Three on the floor, and Bulldog escaping his cage and heading out into the basestar: "And if I hadn't figured a way to escape, if I didn't make my move when I saw they left that door wide open for me, I'd be as good as dead right now!" Adama puts it together: "Is that what they did? Did they leave the door standing open?" Bulldog starts to scream: "That's not what I meant. I know the truth." But in the flashback, there's a Three, and she's not sick, and she is hidden, and she is healthy, and she is watching Bulldog leave with a huge fucking grin on her face. "I beat them. Do you understand? I beat them at their own game. I frackin' killed her, and I escaped. You trying to take that away from me?" Um, yes? This isn't the simple answer either? You come out of the cage and find you're in another cage, and escape that one, you're in another cage. This is the nature of synthesis, but why aren't you helping the tortoise?

Tigh appears just then, back online, cocking a gun and calling Danny's name. Bulldog attacks, and Saul Motherfucking Tigh takes him out faster than the human eye and it is very awesome: "Stay down!" Saul calls to Bill, who confirms that he's okay, and then Tigh gives a little speech: "You don't wanna believe it, do you? I know. The truth hurts, Bulldog, but it's better to know the truth than to live a lie. We're all soldiers, Danny. We're all expendable. And we did what we had to do to protect the mission. It's ugly, but there it is. The Cylons let you go. The question is why? Ask yourself that, Danny. Because up until a minute ago, you were doing exactly what they wanted you to do: come here and learn the truth and seek revenge. And that's exactly what you did. You almost gave them what they wanted." Hogan's my hero. Tigh drops the pipe and frees Adama's hands.

Saul puts a pistol in Bill's hand, [which is central](#): something broken just got fixed; Tigh rejects Adama's guilt like Laura will in the end of the episode, in apology for what he's done since the beginning of this one. "Tell you a dirty little secret: the toughest part of getting played is losing your dignity. Feeling like you are not worth the oxygen you are sucking down. You get used to it. You start to believe it. You start to love it. It's like a bottle that never runs dry. You can keep reaching for it over and over and over again." Redemption comes through working a story out to its logical conclusion and then taking yourself out of it: taking the wish apart and seeing the ugly stuff inside. It's why myths have power. Looking at Bulldog, at his rage at Bill's offense of being



human, looking at Bulldog coming out of one cage and into another one, gives Tigh just the space he needs to breathe, and think, and see the story for what it is. Bill asks him how you're supposed to put the bottle away; Bulldog looks up at him too. I love how everybody finally gets how awesome Saul got. "I don't know. One day you just decide to...get up and walk out of your room." (I want to draw a connection here -- I'm not sure if it's legit -- but it has to do with Gaius working out basestar life at a constant rate and that rate being matched by Tigh learning to live among humans again. I dunno, though. It just struck me this week, an accumulation of parallels specific to this week. We'll watch out for that.)

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Roslin's going to bring this up in a sec, but as long as all the parts are here: two men, deserted by Bill, assuming that he was infallible, locked in cages. Okay, that's one thing. And they get up and walk out of those cages, into bigger cages. But we're also talking about guilt, and about shame. Taking personal responsibility for an engine of war, with all its million moving parts, is just another way of asking for the easy answer: of getting control. So really, you've got three men thinking Bill's in charge, only Bill's one of them, and none of us is going to survive unless the man at the top can forgive himself. Again. But you have to look closer and further away: there's another cage here. Count their masters as they multiply: Three sends Bulldog on a mission of vengeance, using his pain for her own purposes. Tigh contributes, adjusting Bulldog's vector to make it easier; aiming him at Bill. And when Danny calls for him, Bill comes running, supplying the target. All because the buck stops with Bill. But the war started when the Admiralty used Bill, and Bill used Bulldog, to start the war -- so the buck stops with the Admiralty, and blood leads to blood, but these are still the easy answers. It's another cage, which is what Roslin's about to explain; this episode reflects the season like a fractal, as they all have, which is why I love this season. It only takes one man because the personal is not political. That's self-obsessed Baby Boomer thinking. The political is made up of the personal, which is a very different proposition. E pluribus unum: there was never a movement or a war or a terror that didn't amount to a lot of people's personal shit accumulating in a particular direction, on a particular day. Without Cally endangered, without Leoben and Kacey, without

Charlie's son Kevin, there's no Circle. But that's resisted, always, because we need easy answers and we need control. We need to point a finger and say, "Terrorists are so vaguely evil and crazy that they don't even register as human; they all look the same, their religion is complicated. My racism is patriotic, because I can't handle a complex, realistic, tainted image of my country, because the personal is political." The Other becomes the scapegoat, carries the monster, and that's how the Admiralty stays clean -- and that's how we stay clean, too. But you're still in a cage, and there's still an ugliness that pertains to using people that way, but human psychology is based on projection. New Caprica was settled and later occupied because Laura got suckered into a gay marriage debate, because thousands of people bought the image of Gaius Baltar, because they were tired and wanted a home, because Gaius took something broken and broke it further, because Bill let Fleet defense trickle through his hands day by day, because Caprica and Boomer were changed by love. All of these and a thousand more. And once there, Kevin was only seven when he was killed. While taking it all on, like Bill, is the more honorable option, it's still just another easy answer.

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Adama stands across from Roslin's desk, on Colonial One, and she looks at him owlishly, and he presents her with a document and stands at attention. After a few seconds flipping through it, she glares up, disgusted: "Your resignation. You have gotta be kidding me." He repeats himself: "We can't hide from the things we've done. I see no other way around this situation. Maybe it's time, Laura." She looks him directly in the eye: "Siddown, Bill." He does. You would too. She accuses him of being naïve: "Did it ever occur to you that the Admiralty may have set you up to provoke a war they wanted? It's naïve to think that horrible things that we can't understand have simple explanations. Because simple explanations make us feel like we have control when we don't. We know why the Cylons attacked us, and it wasn't any one thing. Oh my Gods. We did a thousand things, good and bad, every day for forty years, to pave the way for those attacks." Bill shakes his head, thinks of satisfying the Gods: "Something has to be done." Laura takes out an invitation to his anniversary commemoration: "You know what that is?" Adama takes it, reads it, drops it. "Medal of Distinction." Roslin hides her love, and her smile, behind anger at him and for him: "This was before I heard

about this resignation of yours. So." She makes the hmm again: "I'd like to propose this. You seem hellbent on paying some kind of penance for whatever it is you think you've done. So instead of resigning, why don't you get up and walk out of here. meet me on the port hangar deck tomorrow evening for this ceremony, and let me pin a frackin' medal to your chest." Adama shakes his head: "I can't." And Roslin gets a bit more flinty: "It's not for you, it's for them. Stand up there, acknowledge your Fleet, and give them what they need: a hero. That'll be your penance. Even if it kills you."

On the Galactica hangar deck dais, Roslin stands with Bill, attended by Helo and the CIC crew. "On behalf of everyone in this room, it is my pleasure to present you, Admiral Adama, with the Medal of Distinction for your forty years of courageous service to the Colonial Fleet. Congratulations." Applause hits as Adama takes the podium, and we don't hear a word he says; the applause fades and we cut around the adoring Fleet: Apollo and Dualla, Starbuck. Athena. We've seen how well they deal with complexity -- what was Season 2.5 but a demonstration of the need for these idiots to have something easy to fight? Take away the resurrection ship and you're left with a bunch of jerks -- and for that reason alone, they need this: a hero. They need Bill Adama to ignore complexity and shared blame just a while longer, give them another easy answer for a little while, so they'll have time to heal. Before the next thing hits.

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Cottle and Adama say goodbye to Bulldog, who's going to another ship in the Fleet for recuperation time, but we'll see him again, I'm sure. Adama offers him a Fleet uniform, calls him "Lieutenant," but Bulldog's caught in the idea that he struck a commander and superior officer, and is willing to detach. "Take it. You're not gettin' off that easy." Adama knows, even if nobody else is hearing it. Sorry I hit you with a pipe and tied you up and lied; sorry about how I used you to jumpstart a war and then shot your plane down and left you for dead. So awkward, but all you have to do is speak. Bulldog takes the uniform. "Once a pilot, always a pilot, Bulldog." They salute each other -- nice bookend with his arrival -- and he boards the Raptor and takes off to heal, and to speak.

Adama's quarters, where Tigh and Adama are about to put Lee and Kara to shame in the extended adolescent apology department. Not that Lee and Kara are anywhere close to that right now, but they've played some doozies in their time. At least Tigh didn't shoot Adama. Tigh comes in, and he and Adama stare at each other for a bit. Tigh digs in the floor with the toe of his shoe, shoulders rounded, eyes grounded: "I heard you won a medal." Bill is gruffly ironic, trying to lighten a mood that won't lighten until something happens: "They give 'em out for anything these days. Good behavior, attendance, playing well with others..." He finally looks Tigh in the eye; Tigh does not know the meaning of any of these words. "I need you back in the CIC," says Adama. "It just ain't the same without you in there intimidating the inmates." Tigh jumps and shakes his head, nervous that this attempt at reconciliation looks weird: "No. No no no. That's not what I came here to talk to you about." Tigh and Adama stare at each other, trying to remember how they've done this before: the awkward mutual thing. Why is it so hard to remember when you're in the middle of it? "Okay. So why are you here?" Tigh literally shrugs, and his body folds out like an eight-year-old, into awkwardness and shy nervous anxiety: "I don't know. Nothing." Sorry I fired Bulldog at you; sorry I spread dissent through the ranks like a cancer; sorry I hate you for being fallible. "You wanna tell me what happened to Ellen?" asks Adama. Tigh sighs: "I could use a drink." Bill pours out two, and they sit down. They begin to speak.

# ASKING FOR IT

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 9 | Aired on 11.30.2006

*Unfinished Business* - The Longest Mutual Apology In The History Of Space Travel continues as Kara volunteers to let Lee beat her up for ditching him naked on [New Caprica](#). Ditto Bill, only with Chief and Cally. I think also he might have slept with Madam President. I know they at least got stoned and cuddled.

**Recaplet:** Kara ditches Sam so she can watch Lee bareknuckle Helo. Lee, of course, takes it on the chin. (Everything sounds dirty this week!) Unluckily, 'Buck's got next, so we get to sit through their whole tureen of bullshit that we already probably wrote a five-part fanfic about. Meanwhile, Laura and Bill hang out and are adorable, plus total potheads. Also, New Caprica was -- this just in -- radically sucky. Day 123 of the Colonization: Gaius sucks; Saul and Ellen are still heartbreaking; Chief and Cally drink poison/set themselves on fire/die horribly/over and over/for a bajillion years OR they are pregnant and whine their stupid asses off. YOUR CALL. Starbuck and Apollo fuck from like Thursday to Monday; Dualla and Anders sit around munching on Cheetos and -- to be fair -- going: "Fucking FINALLY."\*

Next morning: even Adama can't stand the sight of Cally or Chief/banish them to New Caprica OR start their new family on the settlement (YOUR CALL); Starbuck and Apollo go 8000 varieties of Bareback Boomer after their gross liaison, and get married in a goddamn hurry to their respective beards/soulmates (YOUR CALL), and act all shifty/Scientologist about everything. Adama and Chief punch each other a lot, because "Galen" means "physician" and "Adama" means "scab-picker," but Adama turns it into a slow-clap moment, as you know his ass is wont to do. Then Lee and Kara enter the ring and, one assumes, make hideous hatefucking love in front of everybody. Sam and Dee are like, "OMG! So done with these dudes," and then get married and have lots of gorgeous muscled babies, because the only people that care about those particular douchebags at this point are the shippers. (And your recapper. YOUR CALL.)

**Good:** Lee and Kara actually say something about something, instead of whining and secret cutting. Also Ellen. **Bad:** No Cylon baseship threesome/Jesus fooferaw; and Cally and Chief continue to suck balls, even as they make more and more sense and

become more and more goddamn sympathetic. **Other:** Great episode, wonderfully done, very effective. Nice way of uniting all the characters in story rather than just focusing on (my) favorites and ignoring everybody else. Like you should be doing.

(\*Also: " Fucking FINALLY." Because fucking finally.)

**Recap:** Previously, everybody was awfully tired, so when they colonized New Caprica, everybody wanted to go down there. Tigh went with Ellen and more than half the crew; Kara and Anders went down; Chief and Cally went down. Then the Cylons came, and Adama eventually saved almost everybody. Lee went from being in love with Kara to marrying Dualla, his relationship with whom was always a bit of a joke to Kara. But he tried to make it work. Kara's own marriage didn't go quite so well, and after her abduction and imprisonment by Leoben, she asked for a divorce.

Now there's a pair of people boxing under bright lights: it's Apollo and Helo. Last seen fighting over whether or not they should commit genocide on Helo's wife's people.

Eighteen months ago, the morning after breaking ground on New Caprica, Apollo woke up naked, on the ground. He was alone.

Helo and Lee circle each other; Lee remembers dancing with Kara the day they broke ground on the settlement; how he kissed Dualla on the wing of a Raptor one morning, in the bright sunshine.

Starbuck climbs off Anders and thanks him, saying it was just what she needed. She immediately starts getting dressed, and he snits that he's glad to be of service.

Sharon cheers Helo on at the match, as he hits Lee again and again.

Starbuck can't find her shirt and is getting more and more frustrated. She needs out. She's running late. There's a dance. Anders finds it, but holds it out of her reach. "Kara, I want you back. I want our marriage back. I want a real marriage." And if she's not ready for that? "I don't know. Then I guess you'll never be. Maybe because I'm not what you really want after all." That is precisely two-thirds of the point. Good on Anders. Why is he



here? ["For me? Is that reason enough?" -- Joe R] She stares at him and grabs her dogtags: "I'm late for the dance." She'll need her dogtags for the dance; Sam already said he doesn't want them anymore. At the door, she grabs his boots and hurls them inside. He lies back as she slams the door behind her.

Looking down on the floor, Kara watches the fight. She remembers waking up with Apollo, on New Caprica; she heads downstairs to the ring. Kat's urging Lee on as Kara approaches Sharon: "If it isn't the Fighting Agathons, huh?" Sharon tends to Helo before the next round and notes that Starbuck's running late as usual. "At least I got here in time to watch you kick the CAG's ass!" Kat advises Lee on the next round; Helo vows about how Lee's really coming after him. "He's a tough little fracker, I'll give him that." The Fighting Agathons are very hardcore but sweet with each other. Cottle watches the next round begin, cutely shadowboxing with himself. Dualla and Adama approach as Sharon and Starbuck watch. "Look at that," marvels Kara. "A couple months ago you would've had to roll him into this ring." Sharon nods without taking her eyes off Helo. "Not anymore. You know, with a cooler head, he might have half a chance." Kat and the crowd cheer, shouting Helo and Lee on.

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Lee remembers Main Street on New Caprica, how he walked through the crowd with his uniform disheveled, and how he saw Sam and Kara holding hands, and how he pushed past her, heart breaking.

Tigh counts him out. Leaning on the ropes, he stares down at Kara, nearly knocked out. "Come on," she whispers, urging him to stand up. Kara wants to see Lee keep fighting and never give up. Kara Thrace loves Lee Adama. Cottle judges Lee too hurt to continue and calls the match for Helo. Apollo fights it but eventually leaves the ring. Tigh calls the next match.

Off to the side, Starbuck approaches Apollo, congratulatory and nasty in equal amounts, as usual. "Good fight. Bit off a little more than you can chew, huh?" He ignores her. "Oh, come on, Lee. Don't be that way. Stick around. The night's young!" He finally looks at her, saying she'll have to enjoy it without him. "Pulling your tags out so soon?" They were never just dogtags to Kara.

"I'm done, Kara," he says wearily. Dualla watches them, her face a dark line. Starbuck drops her tags into the box: "I'm not." He stands up a little straighter. "Now who's biting off more than they can chew, Captain?" She gets in his face: "Not me, from where I'm standing, Major." He pulls his tags back off and drops them in the box, then shoves past her. She clears her throat, watches him walk away, and wonders what's going to happen next.

Credits. 41,422 souls in the Fleet. 17 months ago, or 8 months before the Occupation. Raptors flew overhead, building the settlement. Dualla and Lee walked down the street, marveling at their progress on New Caprica. Dualla had been down to the surface since the Groundbreaking; Lee never went back. "I'd still rather sleep in a warm bunk every night than muck around in this muck." Dualla grinned. "Bunk's gonna be plenty warm tonight. He said yes." Apollo was excited to hear it: the Admiral approved Dualla's transfer to the Pegasus. They were going to be together. So of course Kara and Sam walked up. "You two just don't know how to keep a secret, do you? So what, are you guys here to see Baltar put a shovel in the ground?" Anders quoted the invite: "Join the celebration as we break ground for a better tomorrow." They laughed about how stupid it all is. Dualla spoke up, pushing it just a tad: "There's an open bar." Starbuck laughed, and pointed at Lee: "You gotta let your better half do the talking for you, she gets right to the point!" She grabbed Dualla around the shoulders and dragged her toward the bar, friendly and laughing. Lee and Anders stared at each other. "Let's go find us a better tomorrow!"

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Elsewhere, Roslin sat down beside Adama, laughing at him for playing in the sand. He hadn't touched ground in a very long time. He wanted it in his hands and under his feet. "It's not sand, it's alluvial deposits. This used to be the river mouth." Now, though, it was all dried up. "You just had to take off your shoes and play in the alluvial deposits. How romantic," she murmured, with a sidelong glance. He kept playing with the sand, adorably, and finally looked up: "That's a nice color on you." She glowed, in her lovely red dress, and they agreed how nice it was to see each other. It was about a month since she tried to steal the election, and he talked her out of it. She'd never really needed him that bad before.

Roslin finds Adama, standing at ringside, and explains that her father was an "avid fight fan," so she loves boxing. That doesn't surprise me in the slightest: "I love a good fight," she says. Dualla works on Lee, while Starbuck wraps her hands. "I heard about your so-called 'dance.' Accidentally, I might add." Adama apologizes, explaining that the dance is a private tradition. "There's a lot of frustration aboard warships. Arguments become grudges, then end up being feuds. This allows them to let off some steam out in the open so everybody can participate. Rank doesn't matter. As long as you throw your tags in the box, everyone's fair game." (You couldn't do this, say, around the time they started holding secret courts and airlocking each other?) The current match ends, and Tigh calls up the next dancer: Hotdog. Roslin asks if he threw his tags in, and Adama laughs. "No. No, I wish. All the frustrations that I have..." Are in my pants. I'd like to see Roslin and Adama go a few rounds. Tigh asks Hotdog for his dance partner; Hotdog names Starbuck. I wonder why? What's he got to work through with her? Helo grins at Kara, the [Karl And Kara Show](#). Kat shouts her name, Helo urges her up and she climbs into the ring. They begin to fight.

Kara remembers standing in Main Street with Sam, watching Lee's face as he got closer. Silently begging him to understand the story she's been telling him for years. She remembers how he pushed past them with an angry word, and how she stood there, ashamed, and almost cried, and let him go.

In the ring, she finally drops Hotdog. Lee and Kara stare at each other. Their fight's still coming.

Commercial. Gaius Baltar broke ground on the settlement of New Caprica, to the sound of applause and cheers. Jammer was there, and Duck. "Thank you. Let this day be remembered as the day we broke ground for our new tomorrow." A new tomorrow without fear or terror or problems: a new presidency for a new world. A chance to rest.

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At the makeshift bar for Groundbreaking Day, Anders was telling a story about handcuffs and drinking straws, to Tigh's loud approbation. Saul caught his wife's eye, and they smiled sweetly at each other. No more catting around, no more ambiguity, no

more jealousy. A second honeymoon. Later, they sat together, alone. "Did I ever tell you how glad I am I married you?" She smiled at him. She was beautiful. "Not once." He grinned, and said he'd save it for a special occasion; they kissed.

Now Tigh stands in the middle of a boxing ring, watching them bleed for each other, all alone.

Sam sat at the bar on New Caprica. Kara was half-lit, careening into him giddily. They laughed, and kissed. And Lee watched them.

Roslin and Adama stood near the dance floor, listening to Gaeta go on and on. He was fresh and excited about his new job, working with the President, innocent, stumbling over himself, recognizing the new Finance Minister, tearing off to talk to him. Adama and Roslin chuckled, and Adama pulled out the joint they'd stashed when he ran up. "Oh, my Gods," Roslin breathed, mirthfully. "I didn't think he'd ever leave!" They agreed Gaeta's a good kid, and leaned back, against the dance floor. "You say this stuff grows around here?" She nodded, and looked closely at him, phrasing her request in the form of a little real estate discussion. "In the mountains north of here there's this little stream that comes down into this lake the water is so clear it's like looking through glass. I'm thinking of building a cabin." Up in the mountains it wasn't so dry. You could rest. Adama finished the joint: "That's good." She nodded, happy, relieved to be on New Caprica, with him. "Mmm. It is good." It was all good; all of it was good. The settlement, the Groundbreaking, the new life. It was good.

Roslin shouts her approval at a "beautiful combination," in the middle of a fight. A deck hand approaches and asks Chief what he missed. "Grisky, you done that bird already?" Grisky whines. "Gyro's giving me trouble. Come on, Chief! I'm the only one over there." Chief smiles, chills out, waves it off. "Frack it, get yourself a drink." Adama stares at him from down the line. "Ship down, Chief." Chief smiles, chills out, waves it off: "Yeah, we'll get it tomorrow. I'm figuring I'll give 'em a little R&R." Adama stares at him and remembers that feeling.

18 months ago, he poured Chief a drink, up on Galactica, and congratulated him on Cally's pregnancy. "I may be jumping the

gun, but... heh! The first boy born on Galactica!" Chief looked down, and away, feeling like a traitor. "That's the thing I want to talk to you about, sir. Um, Cally doesn't want him born here. And neither do I. Not if he has a chance to grow up breathing fresh air." Adama handed him the drink, asked for clarification. "Well, we both would like to request to be relieved of duty and settle on New Caprica." They're NCO, they didn't ask for this. But Bill was losing people left and right, and like it or not, Chief and Cally were and are in some ways the heart of the Fleet, especially for Bill. "No, no way. You're both here for the duration."

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The fight ends, and Adama hands Roslin his glasses. "Can you hold these? Thank you." The crowd quiets down as Adama gets up in the ring. "Chief," he blurts, and people start whispering. "Get your fat, lazy ass up here." Chief's like a son to him. Every attack, every criticism, every rude comment he hands out, it's pointed back at him: not Chief for being lazy, not Lee for being fat. Bill Adama, for letting it happen. Tigh watches as Helo wraps Adama's hands. "Make 'em tight," Bill says. In the other corner, Chief's reassuring Cally: "He's an old man, it's fine. He's not serious, anyways." Which is the problem. Tigh murmurs into the Admiral's ear: "Sure about this? It's your funeral." Is he asking for it? Or is he demanding it? The crowd cheers as Chief kisses Cally and climbs into the ring. Adama drops Chief almost immediately, lashing out with a powerful punch. Everybody is shocked. Adama looms over him. "Get up, Chief. We're just getting started."

Commercial. New Caprica: Main Street, where Chief told Cally all about the Admiral's decision, doing his Chief thing, making it sound good. Finding the light in things: "It's probably better to have the baby on Galactica anyways. You know, there's, uh, sickbay, doctors, medicine." Cally smiled at him, accepting it. "No, it'll be better. We'll be happier." He kissed her. They would be. They would have been.

Starbuck cheers for Adama as the fight continues.

At the Groundbreaking, everybody was square dancing. Trading partners. Dualla, Sam, Lee, Kara, flying out and back again, into the whirl. Ellen and Tigh kissed, in love. Kara came ramming into Anders at the bar, giggling and drunk. They laughed, and they

kissed, and Lee watched, and caught her eye. Now he watches her, the new dance.

Nearby, Roslin stares, and remembers herself and Adama, snuggling behind the dance floor on New Caprica. Her head was on his shoulder, her arm thrown across his body. "Is this really it, Bill? Is this how we're gonna spend all the rest of our days?" Above and behind them, Lee and Kara danced with Dualla and Sam, and the rest of the settlement. Trading partners, round and round. "Maybe we should just enjoy this," Laura said, into Bill's shoulder. He looked up at the sky, suddenly bashful: "I am." Aww. She nestled closer. "No, no, I mean enjoy being here on this planet as long as it lasts. I mean, maybe the Cylons come back, maybe they don't, but for now, right now...we've got a break." He sighed, she listened to his heartbeat. "I've got people that want to get off the ship, move down here." She smiled to herself, knowing he'd just answered a question she never asked. "Can't say as I blame them. I mean, what are you gonna do?" What was he going to do? Laura doesn't even have dogtags.

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Adama bends to shout at the Chief, on the floor of the ring. "This how you fight your enemies, Chief? This how you fight for your life? No excuses. Show me you're a soldier. Get up!" The Chief stands up, and finally hits back. Adama doubles over. Chief comes closer, really angry this time. He doesn't know what it's about yet. "Is that what you want? Is that what you want, Admiral?" When he comes close enough, Adama straightens up, pounding Chief. Everybody cheers; Kara is impressed. "The old man's got chops. He knows when to make his moves, when to hold back. I wish I could say the same for his son." This is how Kara is now. Dualla and Lee stare at her, grossed out beyond belief. The fight continues; Kara keeps yelling.

Kara sat, drinking alone near the dance floor. Lee approached with liquor, and she tossed her empty cup to the ground. "Just in time. I was runnin' on bingo fuel." Apollo saw Anders, lying on the ground, and archly noted that she'd literally drunk him under the table. More to the point: "Where's Dee?" Lee giggled. "Oh, she, uh, packed it in. To go pack." He laughed at his little joke. How much of it was theatre? "Guess it's just you and me then," Kara laughed, and they sat with that, in the growing quiet, as people



left the Groundbreaking behind, in twos and threes. "Yep," he said. "It's just you and me." It always was.

Chief finally gets the drop on Adama; Lee shouts for his father. Cottle comes into the ring and tells Adama to quit already. Bill grits at him to stop the bleeding; Laura leans over him. "Coagulant for the swelling and bleeding. Come on, you insist on doing this? You want to do this. You're crazy, right?" His only response is to spit a very terrifying amount of blood into a very gross bucket. "You want to do this?" He looks up at her. "Yeah." She nods. "All right. Keep your guard up. He's coming in wild. Get him with a left hook. You wanna win?" Nope. Obviously. "I'm not gonna win," he says, almost jokingly. The dude -- is it Kelly? -- working on Chief notes that it's Bill's jabs that are killing him. Ask Lee about that.

In the morning after Groundbreaking, still wearing their clothes from the night before, Adama and Roslin approached Cally and the Chief. In the night, Bill asked himself the same question as Kara, and came to the same conclusion as Kara, but that didn't mean he couldn't be merciful. Show a little love to the people that had earned it; the ones that deserved a new life, on this new world. "I've been thinking about, uh, what you said. A Battlestar's no place to raise a family. So I'm gonna miss you, Chief. I wanna wish you good luck." Chief was overwhelmed and happy; Cally nearly cried. "I want you guys to have at least a dozen," he said, and Cally laughed and kissed his cheek. The Admiral poured a line of salt across the ground between them, and said goodbye. Gave them to New Caprica as a symbol of hope. The new tomorrow. She was beautiful, and so young. She fell into the Chief's arms; there were tears of gratitude and love in his eyes. It was good. Life on New Caprica was good. The Admiral did this for them.

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Cottle and Roslin watch Chief destroying Adama. Just like he wanted. He finally drops, covered in blood, and Starbuck hangs her head. Everybody goes all Mudville, staring. Needing a hero. Tigh stares down at him. Tigh knows what this is about better than anybody; he's been watching Bill do this longer than we have. The Chief finally helps Adama to stand. Adama stands with his arms on Chief's shoulders, looking at him. Apologizing.

Breathing hard. "When you stand on this deck, you be ready to fight, or you dishonor the reason why we're here. Now remember this: When you fight a man, he's not your friend. Same goes when you lead men. I forgot that once. I let you get too close. All of you. I dropped my guard." Kara: "I gave some of you breaks." Saul: "Let some of you go." Cally: "Before the fight was really over. I let this crew and this family disband. And we paid the price in lives. That can't happen again." He climbs out of the ring, trailing salt and alluvial deposits behind him. Epiphanies are great, but how many weeks do you give him this time?

Chief calls to a deck hand, ready to resume working again. Roslin takes Adama's arm and walks him out of the room. Tigh calls the dance over. "Get your booze and your dog tags and let's get out of here." Kara watches them drift away, and yells up at Tigh. What about her apology? "Not enough excitement for one night for you, Captain?" She jumps down to grab Lee, who's also walking away. "Hey! Where the frack do you think you're going?" He shakes his head. "It's over, Kara." This is unfinished. She goes for the gut. "So what? You have the guts to try and frack another man's woman but not to fight one?" This is how she gets what she wants, right up in his face. "I wonder if Dee knew what she was getting. Think she would have settled for sloppy seconds?" Apollo punches her in her stupid face. She smiles at him, vindicated: "Truth stings, don't it?" How many times does she have to do this? How many times do you let yourself get hurt, just to prove you love the person? Even the Cylons know about her mom. "You want a fight, Captain. You got it." He storms off, ready for their next match. She stares after him, wondering what happens next.

Commercial. Shouting and cheering as Kara circles Lee in the ring, hitting him over and over. Nothing new there. Dualla comes in, and immediately knows everything that's going on, and how we got here, and where it goes from here, and why it's happening. Poor Dualla. "Come on. You afraid to hit me? Or maybe you can't."

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Drunken and giddy, Kara and Lee rambled away from the Groundbreaking. Kara pointed at a clearing, under the moon, called it "a great place for a house." Lee scoffed at the idea of her

settling down, asked if really meant to give up flying. But Kara is a fighter. "Flying's gonna suck now anyway. Lots of training, endless CAPs. The war's over." She looked at him meaningfully: "So's all the good stuff." New Caprica meant laying down burdens. Things that were too hard.

Lee finally starts hitting back. There's no referee and there's no bell.

"Gimme a tour of the future life of Kara Anders," he said, and she cocked her head at him, brave under the moon. "I'm not getting married." He got confused and stopped making sense, asking too many questions without enough words. He forgot where his dogtags were. "Then what's the point, Kara? I mean, you love him, right?" She pulled back like she'd been burned; her fingers ached. "Where are we going with this, Lee?" But Lee was thinking of the grander picture, this place for a house under the moon. This dream vacation. "Now that's the question, isn't it? Where are we going? I mean, what if this is it? The rest of your life, Kara. Is this how you want to spend it? Is this who you want to spend it with?"

They're evenly matched, fighting their worst. Anders enters and asks Dualla, with a hand upon her arm, what they're doing. "What's it look like?" she says, rolling her eyes. "Looks like they're trying to kill each other." He's sweet, and naïve. "Kill" isn't the word. Dualla just watches, the rest of her life playing out in front of her yet one more time. "That's one perspective."

Kara and Lee kissed, and made love under New Caprica's moon. She laughed quietly in the hush when they were finished. "Well, that makes things more complicated," she said. Another burden. "What are we gonna do?" Lee was feeling expansive and crazed; everything you want in the worst possible way. "What are we gonna do? We accept it. Tomorrow, I tell Dualla, you tell Sam." Just like that? "Just like that." Kara whispered, in the silence: "I don't know." But Lee was in love with love and his own bravery, and wanted to shout it to the skies. Kara laughed at him, because she hadn't ever met this version of Lee before. He was like a little boy. "Yeah, right." He took it as a dare, and against her giggling protests, stood naked under the moon of a fresh new world, without countries or boundaries or enemies, and howled. "My name is Lee Adama, and I love Kara Thrace!" She begged him to

stop, calm down, but he reminded her they were on the frontier; he reminded her that this was only fantasy. They were breaking ground. "Well, it's not like anybody'll hear. We're in your cabin in the forest, right?" She smiled at him, at the sudden youth and strength of him. "I love Kara Thrace! And I don't care who fracking knows!" He was everything you could want him to be. In the worst possible way. She called him crazy and told him to get down, but he stood there naked and grinned at her, and promised her he wouldn't stop until she did it too. But she couldn't. You don't say things like that. Not when the Gods seem hellbent on taking everything away. You don't risk that kind of bravery if it really means something. It's better to be alone. "I can't," she said, but he didn't hear her. "Okay, here we go again. Lee Adama," he started to shout, and she finally gave in. She stood up, shivering, naked under a strange moon. "Okay. Ka --" and her breath caught on the enormity of it. She took it as a dare. "Kara Thrace loves Lee Adama!" She squeaked to herself, impressed and afraid and proud of her bravery. To stand naked before the moon and announce it to the world. They kissed. It was everything he wanted.

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He drops her. Helo begs her to stand up, urges her on, and she fights dirty. She always fights dirty. With one mighty roundhouse she kicks his feet out from under him. Just like always. Then another half-crouching kick to the face.

Apollo woke up alone, in the alluvial deposits of a foreign nation, a wild world, and under the morning sun he dressed, and headed back into town. He was met by his father, still wearing the same clothes as the night before. Lee didn't look too great, between sleeping outdoors and putting on a wrinkled uniform in the cold morning. "You look like you had a good time," said his father, and he nodded. "It was some party!" Bill smiled. "Yeah, well, it's been a hell of a morning too. You missed all the excitement!" Lee snapped half to attention: "Problems upstairs?" No, no problems. Good things, Bill called them. "Kara got married. Believe that?" Apollo choked on something but his dad didn't notice. "Yep, 'Bout an hour ago. Found herself a priest, went down by the river and got married." Down by the river, where it's wet. Lee choked, sick, and they spotted Kara and Sam, walking down the street. Happy and together. Bill chuckled over the way things had gone with

them. "Well, she deserves it, man. We all deserve to be happy. I also gave her permission to muster out along with Tyrol and Cally, a few of the others, so it'll be up to us to make sure there's no mass exodus." But in the end, it was up to them, father and son, to make sure there was. Once Gina turned everything upside down again, and favors turned into indictments, and love turned into hate, and freedom turned into torture. Once New Caprica wasn't good anymore, and Bill had to leave them all behind, and come back and unsettle them back into the Fleet.

Shell-shocked, Lee approached them. They were happy, cuddling in the morning cold as they walked. They didn't even notice him at first.

Lee gets up again. She lands several punches. So does he.

Kara woke up on the morning after Groundbreaking, her head on Lee's chest. She remembered what they'd done, and what they said. What Lee said. And what she said. And she made a choice, and she looked down at his body beneath hers, and she said goodbye, and she headed into town to get herself a husband. To make things simpler. She left him sleeping there, alone, exposed on a new world. Naked.

They're both bleeding now. His eyes are starting to cross. Her mouth is a wound.

Lee approached Sam and Kara, and she looked at him, sad and afraid: how far would he push it? Were they about to meet Brave New Lee, who screamed to the sky and felt love so deeply he couldn't help but howl? Or was it regular Lee Adama, who could suffer in silence and fear? Anders stepped forward, ecstatic. "Hey, man. Did you hear the news? We're hitched. We got married! Can you believe it?" Lee admitted that he couldn't believe it. He didn't let her eyes go but he didn't hear what they were saying: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. "No, it was crazy. She comes down, and she wakes me up. She pops the question, she drags me down to the priest, and, bang, like that, we're married!" Lee trained his sights her again: "So it was your idea." Of course it was. He almost laughed. She nearly wept. "Yeah. It was my idea." Sam floated the idea of giving the two of them a minute to talk alone, but Lee nodded, put on his Apollo face, shook Sam's hand, congratulated him. Wished him luck. "You're gonna need it," he

said, pushing past her. She felt him going.

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Lee goes down, gets back up again.

Apollo ran to Dualla, kissing her on the wing of the Raptor in the sunlight. It was very romantic and lovely, that morning, but not as romantic as you might have thought.

The hits come slower and slower. Dualla watches. Kat screams, "Watch that pretty face!" But I honestly don't know which one she means. On [Colonial Day](#), she wore a beautiful dress and smiled at him, clear and easy. The night [before the settlement began](#), they took shots and ended up in bed together. She's bleeding, dukes up. They're both unsteady. She came back into his life, springing up at him from the floor, [two years after](#) Zak's funeral. She came back into Lee's life again and again and again; kicked him in the nads, shot him, disappeared again, waited until he was happy and content before she attacked again. She kissed Anders in front of him, a look of triumph on her face. The hits they're landing, when they connect at all, aren't anything. Token punches that say nothing. They fall into each other's arms, in the middle of the ring, covered in blood. When they rescued her off Caprica, Helo and Sharon in tow, she [kissed him exuberantly](#) and dared him, with her eyes and a funny grin. She teased him and said, again and again, "You love me! You love me! Lee Adama loves me!" And she knew what it meant, and he just thought it was obscene. It's not her that has problems delineating kinds of love: it's him. She doesn't have time for the categories. And after [she shot him, when the Pegasus was nearly lost](#), he held her in his arms, just like this, and said, "Forever." Lee Adama loves Kara Thrace.

The crowd disperses until it's just Dualla and Anders watching. Lee and Kara stop moving altogether, locked up tight in their little box. "I'm outta here," says Anders, taking off, leaving Dualla to watch. She just shakes her head: there's all kinds of love, and all kinds of dancing. Kara Thrace loves Lee Adama: her dog tags never leave the box. Whatever forms it takes, whether it's hateful sex or lovely sex or marriage or sibling rivalry or simple friendship, you're either in or you're out. Her kind of commitment never had a thing to do with sex; after Leoben, I don't know if it ever will. That's what Dualla gets about Kara, and what Lee never



will, because he's Little Miss Rules and Regs. He needs to draw lines around it, say this kind of dancing but not that kind, these kinds of loyalties but not those. This behavior and not that behavior. But Dualla gets that too, and she knows she's another line around it; the line of salt that accomplishes his separation from it. Lee and Kara embrace. "I missed you," she says, and he speaks, thickly at first, choking on the hits he's taken. The blood she's already spilled. "I missed you too," he says, and wonders what happens next. "I missed you too."

# WITH HONORS

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 10 | Aired on 12.07.2006

*The Passage* - Kat manages for the first time in this show's history to actually make redemption stick.

**Recaplet:** Jane Espenson's obsession with food hits the Fleet front and center, contaminating all their business and leading to a plague of starvation! Sharon finds a planet with lots of healthy, disgusting black algae on it, but it's on the other side of a massive star cluster. Trekking through the cluster will expose the civilian ships to radiation meltdown, and flying around it will lead to delay-induced cannibalism. The plan is this: shift all but skeleton crews from the Fleet ships to Galactica; shielded Raptors will lead them across in five trips; everybody meets up on the other side. The big jump on each trip is the one into the middle of the cluster, where they keep the starlight and radiation, and where they'll have to find their ships blind. Not to mention the intense cancer radiation that means they have to do all these things lightning fast. Meanwhile, Kat is actually a drug-running lowlife name of Sasha, who stole Louanne Katraine's name during the holocaust on Old Caprica and has been increasing her Viper power and becoming more awesome and less obnoxious all this time. Hotdog loses a ship on the first trip, Kat loses hers on the fourth. Kara goes on her own mission straight up Kat's nose about the "Sasha" thing, leading civilian ships of guilt and Adama Daddy anxiety behind her in a pretty chain. After that, Kat's in no mood to fuck up, so on the fifth and last trip, she goes ahead and gives herself cancer to make sure everybody lives. Back home, Gaius figures out about Three's recreational suicide game, gets Delphic all over a Hybrid's ass, then asks Three to keep killing herself over and over to fulfill his jerkwad dream of being one of the Final Five Models, thereby removing his guilt not only for engineering the decimation of humanity but also for being a criminally bad basestar houseguest. The idea is so fucking irritating he's probably right. Oh, and also there's another roadstop toward Earth, with the usual embarrassing name of Mervin's Meretricious Mallet of Apollo's Artemis's Harlequin Masquerade of Captain EO's Arrow or whatever. Anyway, it ends on a bum note when Kat makes it right with Kara, then gets a MAJOR handjob from the Admiral in the form of him telling her he thinks of her as a daughter. Which is either a lie or something he

tells, like, everybody. Everybody and everything: His nachos. Left shoe. A mandolin. His son Lee. But it's a really sweet scene, I mean, I cried so I'm not trying to be a dick, but come on. Not your moment, Bill. Let her have her cancer in peace. And how about nobody mentions Hera, eh?

**Recap:** Kat gives us the previous lies. I like that. I like Kat. This episode is funny, because I always thought "[Scar](#)" was at least half Kat's episode, that whole "jouncing the limb" factor that makes you feel like a loser even as you're winning, and then this episode is clearly a Kat episode, while doing some pretty awesome stuff with Starbuck when you're not looking. The other cool thing about this one is that I assumed, because it was written by [Jane Espenson](#), two wrong things: one, that it would be funny -- it really is not -- and two, that it would be wondrous in its words. Which it is. But so much of the story is told through the visual on this show, especially this season, and I should not have made those assumptions, as it turns out, because this is a story of powerful images with strong supporting dialogue. I saw a transcript before I ever saw the episode, which led me to another assumption: that I wouldn't cry my ass off. No more assumptions.

Before [New Caprica](#), before [Pegasus](#), before I even started recapping, Kat was a [crackhead](#). She had a lot to prove. She flew missions like whoa and grew from nugget to a great tall oak that went NOW NOW NOW and sometimes she got tired, and so she took stims. She jounced Starbuck's limb until it almost snapped off, and called her on her shit, and they loved each other, but in a Tigh kind of way. It's good to have people pushing you. Other stuff: Bill invited Saul back into the CIC but that didn't mean he was going to stop loving Helo; Gaius discovered the secret Final Five Cylon models we don't talk about plus the glossolalic power of the Hybrid; and Three went nuts all up in your face.

Now: Sharon's flying a Raptor through the middle of a star cluster, surrounded by fire, and she is not doing well.

Adama and Cottle are conferencing with Roslin on the wireless, telling her there's no food left. There was good food and contaminated food, and the good food got mingled with the contaminated food, so now there's no food. Sharon's out Raptoring for algae to process into delicious meaty protein, is why all the fire and stars and stuff. Hopefully she is not a sleeper

agent, because when you're down on resources what you don't want is Brokeback Boomer [sabotaging your hungry ass](#). Cottle tells Laura the Fleet can survive about a week if Sharon comes back empty-handed. Helo gets choked up and tells them she was due back three hours ago. "The, um... The radiation levels are high, but she's strong and -- she's, um -- she'll be here any moment." First of all, what's hotter than Helo in full dress? Helo crying in full dress. Second of all, there's a very awesome parallel between Laura freaking out on Colonial One, and Helo freaking out on Galactica, about not at all the same thing, but also kind of the same thing. I like to think that Laura has the grace to be worried about Sharon, to love her like Bill does, but... she's great in a lot of ways. Great great lady. But I don't know if she's feeling the Sharon love. Still, a moment of silence.

Sharon flies, sick and coughing. Her radiation badge is going black. That's bad.

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In the pilots' bunks, everybody we know is piling their food stashes on the table. Kat calls down from a bunk that she doesn't have anything, and Starbuck gives her the stink-eye: "Um, to share," she corrects her, and Kat begs her to get off her back. Oh, in this episode all the pilots look like they've been to see that movie *The Holiday*: hollow eyes, nauseous green, a pronounced palsy. It's not so bad right now but it's going to get way worse once the radiation starts in on them. Starbuck yells that she saw a protein bar on Kat's cot, which Kat swears she gave to Cottle. "... Right. Right after I gave him head," says Starbuck. I swear that's what she says. (Team Espenson!) Kat gets bitchy about stop calling her a liar, and Apollo tells them both to shut up, and orders everybody to eat. They do, and it sounds like an orgy. I think Kat calls Hotdog "Baby," so I guess she noticed he got hot. Racetrack moans and gulps and eats, while Starbuck continues to stare at Kat with some radiation of her own.

Sharon's alarms are going off and her rad marker is getting blacker by the second. She looks terrified. Say what you will about my girl Sharon, but she doesn't fucking blink. It's gotta be pretty bad for this to even register. I know she'll be fine because she's still totally going all Admiral Cain on some bitches about her baby, but it still makes me very nervous.

Credits. 41,420 souls in the Fleet and holding steady for now. In the basestar bedroom of bad ideas, Three wakes up. She moves Gaius's hand off her ass and gets up, and we pan back to see Caprica asleep on his chest. So cozy! So sweet! So very much his wet dream. "Somewhere to be, D'Anna?" Still hate that name. But I love how even half-asleep, Gaius still doesn't want his bitches stepping. She tells him not to wake up Caprica, and says she'd love to hang around all day with the mÃ©nage, but there are things she's gotta do. Which, not for nothing, but really? Couldn't you do that while staying in bed? Is that not the point of Cylons? He's right to be suspicious.

Dreamlike piano tinklings and French camera stylings amble us to later, where he asks Caprica what she thinks Three is up to. (Caprica's like an angel when she sleeps. Or when she hangs out inside your head, causing you to masturbate in public and occasionally beat the crap out of yourself.) She's clearly and adorably sleepy, all, "You're not the only one asking that." Things were a lot easier when they were just robots. I love how they're not quite feeling "privacy" as a concept yet. He really did just drop ass-naked into the giantest sorority sleepover of all time. "She's been doing things," says Caprica, and Gaius gets all weird about it: "Doing things? What things?" Right answers, wrong questions. The Eden thing with Cylons has been growing for a good long while, but the snakiness of Gaius gets overt at this point. Like, if it weren't for him and Hera (WHO? WHAT?), Three would still be the most Cylonic of the Cylons, but he had to go fuck everything up just by existing, and now there's free will and personalities and all this other shit they're not ready for. (But then, fucking things up by existing is like his whole deal, every day, in every situation. That, and not even noticing he's doing it. Maybe he's not even the snake, maybe he's just the apple. I think Chip Six is the snake and she's playing both sides. We'll see.)

Sharon's back on deck, and when you look at her Raptor all you hear is the theme song from Sanford & Son. It is crunk. Also fubar: my girl Athena, who stumbles out into the deckhands' waiting arms for immediate shoving into a decon chamber and checking for radiation. Helo and the Adamas are watching, quite worried. She's pronounced "radiation negative," and immediately begins the debrief, because she is awesome. "There's a way through the star cluster. And I found the planet on the other side. I skimmed it and I took photos. There's huge swaths of algae, just

like we thought." Helo's just staring at her rad badge. "It's black," he says, getting choked up all over again, and Lee is just a tad whatever about it: "She's a Cylon. She can handle a radiation dose that big." (I guess there are kinds of radiation, like how there's different kinds of Kryptonite, because more than once on this show there has been radiation that was totally and specifically [bad for Cylons](#).) Helo's like, "Excuse me, Little Miss Cylon Physiology Expert," and over Sharon's protests, Bill agrees with him. I don't think Lee was being a dick about it like the other time, I think he was just worried Helo was going to freak out and endanger the Fleet. Bill's mouth is pointing out that "fine" for Sharon could still be deadly for regular humans, but his eyes are saying, "You need a hug and a nap, Surrogate Daughter #1423." She looks like hell, did I mention? But of course Apollo doesn't have time for your robot cancer: "So then how do we get tens of thousands of humans through there?"

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War Room! Crazy table of excellent ship models and mission exposition! Too bad they didn't snag the Pegasus ready room and cool tech before her [decommissioning ceremony](#); that stuff was awesome. Sharon shows them a treacherous path through the amazing star cluster, pointing out how it's a two-jump journey with a stopover in the middle of hell. "There's not a solution with a single jump?" asks Helo, but she says the cluster's too big, and they can't go around. (Kids ruin your brain, so of course at this point I started singing the Bear Hunt song: "Oh no! A star cluster! Can't go over it! Can't go under it!") Apollo notes the civvie ships aren't shielded enough to jump into the cluster, and out of his ass pulls the probability that 80% of the people onboard would die. Since it's Apollo, this statistic is now made of diamond. "Can we send Galactica for food?" asks Roslin, and Helo and Gaeta point out that this would mean zero defense for the Fleet while Galactica was jumping back and forth, because it would take dozens of trips to get it done. So if, as Gaeta says, they can't bring the food to the people... "What if we bring the people to the food? Put the people on Galactica," says Laura. "Send the civilian ships with skeleton crew, give them radiation meds." She's got some ideas about how people are cattle, doesn't she? Still, Apollo (still trying for his Junior Tigh badge in Nay-Sayery) says that the nav systems on the ships would go blind from the radiation. "They wouldn't be able to see squat on dradis. There wouldn't



even be a way to calculate a jump out." And Sharon points out her first-person reporter take: "Once you jump in, the light is so blinding you begin to drift." And cough, and get horribly sick. "And before you can get your bearings," she slides a Raptor around the ice like it's drunk, "you're over there." Lee makes a little list: "No visual contact. Instruments blinded. Radiation." They'd get lost and burn up.

But while Lee is pointing out these rough truths -- and how cool is it that, ever since around the time of the big [genocide/xenocide debates](#), that's his role? It makes total sense with how the season started -- his dad is pushing the models around in a whole other way, without speaking. He gets tactical like Kara does: without telling anybody. And it's just as irritating, and just as awesome. Lee gets it immediately: "Pilot ship." They'll pair a Raptor with each civilian ship, using Laura's plan of having skeleton crews, and lead them through the jumps. "Raptor navigation systems are hardened against nuclear strikes," Lee tells us, so they can handle the radiation. See how easy that was? I'm still not entirely sure I understood all the niceties of the [Resurrection Ship battle](#), and God knows I watched that exposition briefing like a million times, but this one's easy: shipherds, herding ships.

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How many jumps? Apollo's briefing the pilots in their big briefing room. I love getting to see all these sets again! "Five round trips," he tells them, and they all mutter. "You heard. Five round trips. On our outbound jumps we'll each be responsible for relaying jump coordinates to our own specific civilian ship, nailing them to their jump points, and insuring they don't drift off." Racetrack asks if there's food on the Algae Planet, and Apollo says sort of. Because they'll have to process it first. Kat gets kind of upset at the idea that something called "the Algae Planet" doesn't have a Planet Hollywood or even a La Madeleine, for some reason, and Apollo is hilarious: "The truth is that nausea from the radiation exposure will take care of our appetites." Helo gets worried adjacent to this: "You'll all be issued with radiation badges that track our exposure. White like this, you're okay. As your exposure increases, it'll darken." If it approaches black, they'll get pulled off duty. "Keep checking your badges. It's every pilot's own responsibility to monitor their own badge."

Apollo calls Starbuck up, and she reminds them how it's going to be: "We're all flying solo on this mission. So that means there'll be nobody there to bitchslap you if you start to get tired or start seeing little toasters on your wing." This is how Starbuck always was; it's comforting. "We'll be issuing stims, so use 'em." Kat yells about the stims, but not because she's gone all crazy twelve-stepper: "Stims amp up your metabolism. We've got nothing to burn. You put stims in our systems, we're gonna be flying into the sides of the ships." One of the pilots asks if that's true, so I guess he doesn't know she's the expert. Actually, none of us yet knows just how expert she is. Starbuck gets in a cheap dig about how Kat used to loooove the stims, back when she was a crackhead, and if it was anybody else Kat would throw him the finger, but it's Starbuck, so she hangs her head. Apollo tells them to use their personal discretion on the stims, and tells them the civilians are coming onboard Galactica already. "Skids up in four hours."

Four hours is a long time. Out in Camp Oilslick, Dualla is being... incredibly awesome. The dialogue, but also the performance, which is hardcore and just this side of hysterical: "There is no food here. There are no rations anywhere on this ship. If someone told you there was food, they were lying. If you leave this area, force will be used." Somebody was joking that Olmos made the entire cast starve themselves throughout the entire shoot, which is a very funny joke, but Dualla's doing the whole "out of it but doing her duty" thing so well you'd think it was true. A man named Enzo, who looks like a less-grotesque Spike from Passions in that he's clearly a drug-running sleazeball, recognizes Kat and runs up to her, calling her "Sasha." She whips around on him with a fierceness: "My name isn't Sasha. My name's Captain Louanne Katraine. You understand me? Sasha, and you, were a lifetime ago." Enzo gets all Prince Hal with her about why doesn't she hang out with the lowlifes anymore now that she's an officer, and she tells him to step off. "Do they even know who you really are?" he calls after her. Intriguing. I always wondered why she didn't have a cool callsign; turns out that's all Kat is.

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"Oh, fancy bumping into you here," says Gaius to Three in the corridor of the basestar. As you can imagine, it's not entirely believable, suave, or normal-sounding. How much of Gaius's life is just people refusing to point out that he's not fooling anybody?

Dude, I just imagined somebody telling him that, somebody scary like Three or Laura Roslin, and his face would crumple in a very sad way. "Can you believe I'm lost again? I'll never find my way around this place. Where have you been?" Somebody said this week, and I think it's very awesomely true, that Three is the one Cylon you never forget is a Cylon. The way Lawless plays her is just terribly feline and remote and real and vulnerable, all at once. There are benefits to going the other ways with it -- you may have heard that I love the Eights and Sixes -- but she is just... Did you ever see that movie *The Last Unicorn*? "You must never run from anything immortal." We always say it about [Ryan Seacrest](#), but it applies even better here.

"I've been talking with Simon about our next move toward Earth," Three says evasively, and notes that there's still simmering debate. Lying and cruelty: two more things the Cylons never did until we got involved. Gaius asks if "the relevant Simon" can corroborate this story, and she turns back with a grin: "Beg pardon?" Gaius mentions the "things" she's been "doing," and her first question is -- not "who have you told," as you might think -- but "who would tell you" about her business. She quickly figures out it's Caprica, and thinks about how she hates when her bitches go stepping. "Did you know you have some dried goo in your hair? That can happen when you resurrect." Heh. He puts it together with lightning quickness and she pulls him off the central corridor and gives him the hard stare. "Do you have any idea of what you are accusing me of?" Yes. "Intentionally killing yourself over and over so you can download over and over." He asks if it isn't true that death's just a revolving door, because he's still not clear on how the whole "abomination against God" thing works. That's just, like, words to him. She gets tears in her eyes -- fear? Sadness about how she's going to have to kill his ass? No, it's shame -- before turning it into a terrifyingly sexy, kittenish grin.

Kat mirrors Three's shame, and her actions, pulling Enzo into a niche: "Come here!" Enzo gets horny so we know the deal, and tells her to "take it down a notch" even as she's demanding to know what he wants from her. "Relax. I'm not looking for a business partner," he says. He calls her "baby" and notes how if "they" find who she "really" is, they'll kick her out of the service. Or worse. "Now, do you think that I want that? I don't want that, 'cause that happens, who's gonna feed me?" He laughs and she

just stares at him and wonders how he missed Dualla's yelping announcement. "... Oh, come on. You're getting three squares, you think I don't know that?" He doesn't. She swears there's nothing to give him and he pulls her in, applies himself directly to her forehead, intimate. "Sure you don't. Oh, we go back, baby. Since when is it a crime to take care of your own? Huh?" He breathes her in. "Remember, I know who you are. And I know how to make you happy..." He starts unzipping her uniform, taking off the Kat to expose the Sasha, and she pushes him away, leaving. Zipping Kat right back up.

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Tigh stands outside the CIC door, nervous. A random nods in passing and calls him Colonel. Inside, Adama watches him through the door and grins tinily to himself. Tigh finally goes in; Gaeta watches impassively and Dualla openly stares. The applause starts, quiet as a whisper, and as the officers on deck applaud louder and louder, they welcome him back and call him "sir." "We're with you, sir!" Gaeta stares some more, and he's not clapping, and he's not cheering. Just looking. Finally Tigh gruffs out -- zipping up the Tigh, hiding the Saul -- "Enough! Don't you people have jobs to do?" There's our boy. Same as ever. Adama welcomes the Colonel back, and Tigh greets the Admiral. Bill hoshis to Apollo to begin the op and launch.

"Shepherds, find your sheep. Stay close, and never let them go. These crews are counting on us to guide them through." Starbuck checks in, Kat calls the Chiron, Hotdog's got the Adriatic in sight. "When you jump into the cluster, you will be disoriented. Take it one step at a time. Find your sheep, work the jump calculations, and get them out. Remember, we do not stay beyond our radiation dose limit." I like all this shipherd talk. That's straight-up Apollo for real, right there. ("Stay close and never let them go" is less "Apollo" talk and more "Lee.") Everybody jumps.

Out in the cluster, they are disoriented but they take it one step at a time. The first step is to freak the fuck out, following by steps two through six: screaming blindness and wiggling, alternating four reps at a time. Kat finds her ship and sends the coordinates, and Apollo follows suit. Starbuck's having trouble, but she's got her sheep; Hotdog's flailing in the weeds, screaming. Apollo looks but can't find the Adriatic, and on Galactica Helo calls out, trying

to calm him down: "Hotdog, just ease up on the control, man. Ease up on the stick. This is not a Viper." Ah, the velvet tones of Helo telling you you're okay. That's one of the five signs of a good episode. Hotdog just keeps screaming. Helo comforts him, reminds him to use visual -- the skin starts coming off Galactica, horribly -- and Adama calls the Squad directly. "Apollo, this is Galactica actual. You've reached your radiation dose limit. We've got to jump. Count us down!" Hotdog begs them to wait, begs Apollo and the Fleet to just wait one more second. And somewhere in the heat there's a ship called Adriatic, with a skeleton crew, making their way in the blindness and the light, desperately waiting to be saved, and they're holding the line against the fire and against starvation and against annihilation, and they are heroes. And Hotdog can't find them. "You will jump on my mark. Starbuck, jump on my mark with or without your ship." He begins the count, and Hotdog begs. "We can't leave without them!" And then they do, Hotdog screaming obscenities as they go.

"Jump complete," Gaeta says. "Dradis is back online. Ship reports moderate hull damage." It looked gross and ugly and biological, the way the skin stripped off. "Galactica, Apollo. First trip complete. Raptors, land your birds, debrief your pilots, and prepare to jump back for the second group of civilians." He's already getting sick. And on CIC deck, Gaeta says calmly and sadly, "We lost the Adriatic." Tigh's voice is hushed with horror. "It's only our first jump." And Bill nods. "Yes, it is."

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Trip four of five, opening up in the horror of a star. "Carina, Kat! Report your location." There's no response. Apollo asks if she has her, and Kat screams negative: "Radiation's pissing on my nav!" After a few tense seconds she finds her, then loses her again. Everybody looks like hell. Everybody's cells are shutting down, the radiation having cooked their genes so good they give up the fight. This is not right, is what their cells are saying. I've fucked up. I'm cooked. And instead of going rogue, instead of becoming a tumor -- which is to say, instead of becoming a cancer -- they are giving up. They have the grace to say they're poisoned and won't be coming back. Skin going slack and sallow as their bodies choose death one cell at a time. What we needed and what got cut was a scene, well before this one, where we learned that Kat

loved "Kat" so much, the freedom of flight, the power of being the best, of being strong, all the things we love about the pilots and all the things Kara loves about being a pilot, she loved these things so much she stayed in the sky. Loved not being Sasha, I mean to say: was in love with this new woman she got to be, this name she was earning. When all the other pilots were -- when Kara was -- detaching for life on New Caprica. Kat was a chance to be strong, and good. What we needed to know was that Kat was the Galactica CAG for a year and a half. We should know that, moving forward: Kat was Galactica CAG, up in the sky, while everybody was happy down below. And after that too, when things went bad and they had to run, she was the CAG: she planned useless CAP after useless CAP, waiting to go back and save them. With that on her shoulders: soldier's readiness, a whole gutted army, a skeleton crew, waiting. And now the Carina is lost, and Kat screams, and they jump. "I lost it. I lost it."

Kat comes out of decon looking fucking awful; Hotdog barfs and barfs for a long time. Kat stares into her ruined Raptor, where she just was -- I mean to say that Kat stares long and hard at the place where she just was, and how she failed it -- and then wanders blankly around, watching the crew pull pilots out. Her fellow pilots, Kat's. Watches them fall, near dead from hunger and exposure. Another pilot passes out right in the decon chamber, just falls slack. Helo throws his gloves to the floor and stomps around, grossed out and sick and scared. Kat just stares, and thinks about Sasha and the heroes of the Carina.

Later the pilots are piled on the hangar deck floor, bruised cheeks and glassy eyes. Burned out from the inside and all along their skins. "All right, we managed to get another eight ships through, but we still lost one. We gotta get better at tracking our sheep. Quicker reaction times out of the jumps. Racetrack, don't be calling out coordinates to the wrong ship." Racetrack apologizes: she got mixed up. (I didn't recognize the woman she was [fighting](#) last week: it was Seelix. Interesting, and not just because Seelix creeps me out: Racetrack's a pilot and Seelix is on deck, so it was personal, right? I like to imagine that Racetrack was fighting for Athena's honor somehow. I also like to imagine that she is a saint.) He begs them to keep checking their instruments, and rechecking their instruments. "The instruments are crap," coughs Kat angrily, and Apollo nods. "All right, that concludes outbound four. This is return four. One to go. All right, get some rest." They



stand and stumble and drag themselves out; Starbuck helps another pilot to stand. I mean to say that Starbuck reaches out to a fellow pilot, dead on the ground, and pulls him to his feet again.

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Tigh gives Adama the latest, in his quarters: "A hundred marines too weak to work, two hundred more ready to drop." Adama worries that it'll slow down the algae harvest and Tigh points out as well that "the last batch of passengers kicked up some trouble." He repeats his bitching moan from "[Collaborators](#)" about how they all think "there's a diner and a chef waiting to take their order," on the other side. Which is how the bullshit started last time, but even Bill's had it: "Ohh, when are they gonna learn they gotta process the thing first, for frack's sake?" Tigh takes their part: "Try telling that to a bunch of empty stomachs." He's learning. I love him. "I hear they're still eating paper," says Bill. "Is that true?" It's not: "Paper shortage," Saul deadpans, and then they both laugh. It goes from funny, to sweet, to awkward, to hysterical, to scary, to where all you can think about is the word "dentures." Bill says it's not a good sign, and Tigh agrees, and I don't know if they're talking about how they're clearly going nuts or what. Because that laughing was both.

Sparks and repairs on the hangar deck; Starbuck watches Kat yelling and pushing Enzo off the higher observation deck from Chief's nightmares, and gets suspicious. She recognizes Enzo somehow, I guess from when she was a gumshoe.

"So when you resurrect you see the faces of the Final Five Cylons? The ones that no one's seen." Three's exasperated by Gaius, to say the least. "Why do you want to know about them?" And get a load of this shit right here: "I could be a Cylon. I would stop being a traitor to one set of people, and be a hero to another. And have a place to belong." And that's why I can't fully hate Gaius Baltar, and why I can't stop hating him either: if this episode's about anything, it's that you are the only fucking one in charge of whether or not you're a hero. The mass hallucination that New Caprica was a good idea was really just his smoke-and-mirrors way of trying to get everybody else to tell him he was okay. Even the Presidency was emotionally equal to finally bedding Gina, which was in turn a fracked-up plan to find the most damaged girl in the universe and "save" her, and now

you're going to add "Hero Of The Cylon" to that futile list? Like Cylon accolades mean anything. They can barely tie their shoes at this point. They have more authority figures and Gods and Heroes and bossy ninnies than Adama's got fake daughters. Just stop already. Your neuroses are starting to develop neuroses. You're like a fractal of fracked. "You would help me understand my destiny. Have you seen my face?" Because of course he can't just be any old Cylon, he's gotta be one of their angels, or saints, or demons or whatever it is.

Three pulls out a bunch of pictures -- if you recontextualize it in terms of an artificial intelligence's socialization, then ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny in exactly this way: this is just Lascoux wall-drawings, which lies somewhere on the evolutionary scale between binary circuits and bumfight videos -- and gets more flustered than we've ever seen her. She's clearly frustrated by her inability to create a proper representation the divine with simple pencil and paper: "I try to get it all down while it's still fresh in my mind, but...nothing much comes out. It's just rubbish. I don't remember..." Oh my God religion is so hard. Poor Three. And isn't Gaius fucking helpful: "Cylons, humans. We're all just trying to discover who we are. Aren't we?" Not all of us in quite the same ass-backwards fashion as you, Gaius. But yeah.

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... Segue! Starbuck approaches Enzo in a Galactica corridor as he's chatting up some civilian girl. This is a great little scene that manages to get across about seven pages of script in two moves: "Hey, Enzo," Kara says, and "... Yeah," Enzo says. (And meanwhile there's a whole other story that their faces are saying, and that goes something like this. "Aw, man! I thought you were cool!" Yes, I'm still cool and a drunk and all that, but I need information. "... You saw me with Katraine." I am so grossed out by both of you right now that I could punch a hole through this bulkhead, now what's the story. "I'll tell you everything you want to know." Life just keeps getting more bullshit. "Tell me about it." Which we can agree is a lot to say with just faces.)

Skip the actual thing entirely, since they just did it awesomely through facial mime, and cut to Kat fessing up all over Starbuck's shoes. "I took the name Louanne Katraine from a girl who died two days before the attack on Caprica. Got me through the

background checks." Kara remembers that "times were rough," right around the time most of humanity was exploded, and tells her to keep talking. "I was a drug-runner. Enzo was my supplier. What do you want? We were truckers, okay? We just moved stuff." Which is bad, but not like Cylon bad, and Starbuck is a fuckup too. I can totally see her getting into drugs if she hadn't found piloting after her knee got fucked up. She knows it, and that's not the point: the point is stuff, namely: "People. You see, some think that that's the way that the Cylons infiltrated Caprica. They seeded themselves throughout the Outer Colonies, and then they used criminals to get them into the Capital. Anyone who's found guilty of helping the Cylons is considered a traitor." Kat protests that she didn't ever carry Cylons, and Starbuck asks how she could know -- since nobody knew they looked like us -- and Starbuck just keeps asking and asking and asking. And I didn't really get her point there for a second, because my finely tuned sense of ethics tells me that's not really a valid complaint anymore, but the problem is that she lied -- that she was a drug-runner named Sasha, not a nugget named Kat. She was off the grid and she lied her way in. That's the problem here. Starbuck's right in her face: "How do you know?" Kat asks, at the edge of sense, after all she's been through -- just today even -- if Starbuck's honestly calling her a traitor. She's screaming now, which Starbuck loves, because she gets to be cool and calm and in control. And that's when she's scariest.

"No. I don't think you're a traitor. You're a smart young woman, that's what the old man said." Kat swallows back tears, begging her silently not to bring him into this. "You're just not smart enough to accept who you are," Starbuck says, tasting every delicious syllable. Telling the truth, pretending it's only true for one of them. Kat whimpers, having to look it in the face like that. "You see, you lied your way into the company of good people." Kat begins to weep, begs her outright not to tell the Admiral. "Please don't, or I..." And Starbuck's on it: "Or what?" Or I'll die, is the answer to the question, or something near it. She was CAG for a year and a half. She kicked this whole thing loose already. "Starbuck, please just let me tell him myself. Please just let me. Can you do that?" There's a long pause, and Starbuck spits, disgusted: "Gods." She takes off out of there, leaving Kat alone and sobbing. And I mean to say: Starbuck reaches out to a fellow pilot, dead on the ground, and pulls him to his feet again. The

only way she knows how, the only way Mom knew how; she's returning a favor. How the hell do you think she knew to push the Admiral button? That was her story too, until like five minutes ago. The reason these girls can't keep their hands off each other, the reason they can't stop helping and hurting and bitching out and getting all monstery with each other, is that they already know all this, and can't admit it.

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Cialis commercial, and then back to the basestar. That's beautiful somehow. Three and Gaius stand in the Hybrid chamber, where she's saying funny stuff this week: "... One degree angle nominal seascape portrait of the womanchild cavern of the soul under pressure-heat ratio ides of evolutions have buried their fears... throughout history the nexus between man and machine has spun some of the most dramatic compelling and entertaining fiction." I want to write Hybrid all day long; I think it's my default setting. The difference between "Pythia" and "Bithia" is aspiration. Or is it voice? I always forget. /p/ is unvoiced, that's right: the Hybrid doesn't get a vote. (I'm not going near the obvious "bilabial plosive" joke.) The difference between the Hybrid and Three is aspiration. Or is it voice? "So this is where you got the idea to start intentionally downloading," says Gaius. Which I find fascinating, aspirationally speaking. "Gestalt therapy and escape clauses," offers the Hybrid, and I tend to agree. But the last thing the Cylons need right now is Gestalt: I'm thinking Reichian. Possibly Montessori. "Right, let's see what we can find out," he says, and fully reaches down into the water, like a total Ugly American, horrifying Three and causing me to scream like [Martha Stewart](#) getting peed on by Borat. That is so fucking crass. Three wigs, but I think she's just being superstitious; I don't know. You don't piss in the Grail and you don't go wiggling your hairy knuckles in the pure stuff of resurrection. Especially not in the presence of two women who continually/constantly bathe in it. Plus me. Gross me out.

Three begs him not to touch it -- egging him on, which she has to know on some level, the level that's already risked levels and levels of heresy to get to the truth -- but he does anyway. The Hybrid grabs his hand, suddenly sensate: "Intelligence. A mind that burns like a fire." And it's Gaius, so you know he's like, "Right here, that's me!" She tells him to "Find the hand that lies in the

shadow of the light. In the eye of the husband of the eye of the cow." Which... there's got to be a better way to say that. It's the eye of Zeus, Hera's husband, cow-eyed Hera (because apparently they had Homeric epithets in the Colonies), but it's just so... The Thing of the Guy of the Place of the Way of the Deal. Of Latter-Day Cylons. It was "Zeus" right up until Friday, I'm given to assume, given that there are (smoothly done but noticeable) cuts to the backs of people's heads every time they say "Jupiter." It's the Eye of Jupiter that we're looking for, and that the next episode is named after. Greasy-maned Gaius falls back and bored-faced Three's like, "It's crazy, right? Talks crazy?" But goo-fingered Gaius explains to silky-haired Three about the Hera stuff, and Three's like, "Could there be a connection between their Gods and ours?" (And this show kills you with the pronouns, because I think when she says "ours" she means hers and Gaius's. Which would be like the crappiest God ever.) Also: duh, Three. Pythian Oracles and Eleusinian Mysteries of death and resurrection and you're thinking maybe there's a connection?

"It's a location. A planet hidden in the shadow of light -- probably a cluster of stars -- that'll lead us to the eye of Jupiter. And to the hand hidden in the shadow of light. Probably some type of artifact." They fuss around about hands and five fingers and five faces and generally [X-Files](#) it right up, but basically: so everything's at stake now on the Algae Planet. The Eye of Jupiter to get one step closer to Earth, Gaius's stupid Cylon destiny, and Three's whole bag of bullshit, plus on the human side, you know, the algae that this whole episode is about. It's like somebody wants the Colony and Cylon to have to deal with each other. I'm sure that'll go fucking great.

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In the officer's lounge on Galactica, a horrible thing is happening. Kat's staring in the mirror at herself, and slowly pulling out her hair. Like that dream with your teeth. Hair, and hair, great gouts of hair, coming out in her hands. Her cells revolting. She pulls out her rad badge and stares at it. It's black as night. And she hears a voice, and the voice is Starbuck's, and the voice is saying, "Accept who you are." And Kat grabs her rad badge, sucks it up, goes out and finds Enzo, and remembers Sasha. She says goodbye to that girl, in bed with Enzo, and then says goodbye to Enzo. She remembers who she is, and accepts it, and knows that

she'll leave Sasha out between the stars. And she touches her Raptor, and she goes to Helo's locker and trades out rad badges with him, because he's the best and she knows it; she accepts it. The drums of war follow her into the flock, onto the hangar bay floor, among her fellow pilots, and up onto the wing, Helo's rad badge in her hand. Remember who you are; accept the grace in that: you're Kat. Not Sasha. It's always easier on this show to blame yourself. Nobody wants the embarrassment of absolution.

Outbound trip five, black-badged Kat loses the Faru Sadin, and curses herself again. In the CIC the damage reports are escalating across Galactica, and Tigh reports that the jump spot's gone unstable and they've gotta get out. Engineering reports a cascade of pressure failures. Bill hoshis to Apollo for a group jump, and Kat hisses at herself: "I'm not losing another one." And somewhere between the stars there's a ship called Faru Sadin. The shpherds jump, along with their flock. Outside the cluster, guilty-faced Starbuck and wincing-assed Apollo search frantically for visual on Kat and the Faru Sadin, and can't come up with her. In CIC, bunch-browed Gaeta watches the screens grimly; T'Pol-haired Hoshi reports that a Raptor and the Faru Sadin are missing. "It's Kat. She must've missed the order." Bill gets scared. In the cluster, Kat calls again and again for the Faru Sadin, looking down at her badge whenever she's brave enough. The whole CIC stares at the dradis. Kat flies around the cluster, blind, begging, starting to lose consciousness. Tigh begs her, quietly and under his breath, to come home.

Bill and Gaeta stare, worried. Kat's fading fast. It goes on a long, long time. It stretches out and seems longer than it is. I imagine Kara Thrace has a lot of things to think about during this time.

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Kat and the Faru Sadin suddenly appear on dradis; Hoshi calls out for all of them. Kat radios into Galactica: "Mission accomplished." The Faru Sadin comes home. Kat comes home.

On the deck they crack Kat's Raptor, and she exits to thunderous applause. Adama and Tigh stand in the center, worried, while everybody else is grinning and cheering. She looks like last week's dinner. Her body turning in on itself, screaming something's wrong, but nobody can hear it over the applause.



She holds her hands up, Evita-style, and the crowd goes wild. Portrait of the woman-child, cavern of the soul. Lee realizes something's wrong with her; what she burned off in the pressure-heat ratio of history and starlight. Lee sees her breaking right before she falls.

Kat lies in sickbay, Starbuck standing above. Looking tall as Helo. "They said you wanted to see me," she grits out. Hating the sight of this. Kat swallows painfully, and says she didn't want things to end between them the way they did. I think that Katee Sackhoff should have an Emmy on her shelf, I mean it. I know this is Kat's episode and Kat's scene, but my God Sackhoff can kill you with a look. She chokes out the following, proud and sick, sad and on fire. The kind of shame at somebody else's pain where you kind of hate them for showing you, and yourself for seeing it. The one thing she's always had is a body that works, and looks great. This is what weakness looks like. This is what she helped Kat accomplish. "Listen, um...everybody's...everybody is stuck with the things that they're not proud of. That, uh..." She breathes. "That thing about good people, I... um, I didn't mean that." Kat blinks at her: duh. "Yeah, I know." But it got the job done, didn't it? Burned off all the Sasha and left just Kat. Now there's just one girl in the room with an ugly history. "Here," she coughs, handing Kat a small bottle. "Take these. Sleeping pills." Kat looks up at her; if you know Kara, you know now isn't the time to look her in the eye. It nearly breaks her: "Enough," she says. "So, um, take 'em if you want." Kat thanks her. Once you've burned off that amount of bullshit you can look pain in the eye and make the choice. They tell each other their own stories, over and over, and this is how they tell their stories to themselves. That's why things are so intense with them. [The last time](#) that Kat, Kara, and death were in the same room, Kara pushed Kat out of the way and dove straight for death. And the only reason she didn't die was because she had Sam Anders. That's what we're dealing with here. Kara breaks into tears, finally, and runs straight from the room. As much for Kat as for herself: they've been all over this from every angle now, the pain of seeing your rival fall. Of being seen. Neither of them wants her there for that. Bill claps her on the shoulder on the way out: he knows. Kat was the CAG on Galactica for a year. He knows what it's like to love her.

"Admiral, I -- I know, I'm so sorry... " she says, apologizing for heroics. He shakes his head. "I'm not here to lecture. I'm letting

you know about a promotion. I'm making you CAG again." We should have known this. She cries, almost laughing about it: "Sir, you know I'm not getting out of here, right?" He doesn't answer that question because that question is moot and not important; he answers the question behind the question. "You earned it. What you did was harder than facing a bullet. And you did it without putting one other soul in harm's way. Don't know if I could've done that." Okay, this is a sweet and touching scene and I do love this episode, but, Bill: BWAH! You couldn't go five fucking minutes! You've got a Faru Sadin all right, and you've put the whole Fleet in danger for her more times than I can count on my magical Cylon five-fingered hand. And you sent her over the brink just a few days ago, called her a cancer, burned out what didn't work. And that's the thing you can't admit here: given the same exact abuse, from the same place, for the same reasons, Kara lived and Kat is dying, and Saul's back on the CIC where he belongs. That is something inside, that response. You can't know in advance which way they'll jump, you just have to do it. And love, and hope.

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"I wish there was something more that I could give you." Kat tries to smile. It's ugly, and sad. "No. It's good. I'd like to be CAG very much. Thank you." She snuffles, takes a beat, and realizes she's strong enough to be this real -- Kara gave her that. "Sir, there -- there's a thing. A reason why you might not want to do this. Kara knows what it is, but I wanted to tell you myself." As usual, he's five steps ahead. "I don't need to know anything other than what I already know. When you were CAG, you protected your people. Made them feel safe enough to be brave. What you were gonna say, does it change that?" No. Yes. Kind of. That was another girl, who died earlier today. You make me feel safe enough to be brave. She just looks up at him, mute. He pulls a chair to her side and sits down. Don't think about Billy Keikeya. "Are you...staying?" He smiles down at her. "I love this sickbay, in a way. Reminds me of where my son Zak was born. Caroline was so happy. She was convinced -- both times -- that she was having a girl. So it was a surprise at the end." (Sorta.) Kat asks -- hopefully, safe enough to be brave -- if he wanted a girl too. He realizes there's something more he can give her after all, and almost weeps. "... Yeah. Three's a good round number."

The Admiral doesn't talk, in the briefing room. Just pulls down Lee's name and switches it with Kat's, as CAG of the Galactica, placing Lee's quietly in her place as squad leader. The pilots nod, and weep, and say goodbye.

Before New Caprica, before Pegasus, the first thing the survivors did was take a wall in the corridor of Galactica and make it a little bit holier. They put up pictures of the lost and the dead and the broken, and laid flowers and candles and offerings on the floor, and made little shrines. And on that wall there's a picture of a girl named Kassie, which sounds a lot like Kat and a lot like Kara. She was just a girl. She wasn't a fancy pilot, and she wasn't a drug-runner or an expiated sinner. She wasn't a hero. Just a girl. And after she died, her lover -- a pilot -- got killed too. So then nobody remembered her, except for everybody that ever saw that picture. Everybody that ever walked that hall. And that's how we go on. Starbuck, dressed, healthy, pins Kat's picture just below Kassie's. And she looks, and she weeps, and she says goodbye. She touches it tenderly. Behind her, a respectful distance behind, Lee watches her remember.

# ONCE HAD LOVE...

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 11 | Aired on 12.14.2006

*The Eye Of Jupiter (1)* - Only Chief and Cally's relationship survives part two of the Algae trilogy; everybody else is a pain in the ass. The Cylons and the Colonies converge on a planet with religious significance and a sun going nova.

**Recaplet:** Kara and Lee get busy, but Kara of all people doesn't want to get divorced because it's sacrilege. Meanwhile, Chief goes all Three on the Planet Algae and heads toward the Mysterious Temple of Five, which contains the Eye of the Thing of The Jupiter of the Way to Earth. Just then the Cylons show up, and Three and Cavil -- with Boomer and Gaius for extra variety and awfulness/hilarity -- have a lovely meeting with the Galactica to discuss how Bill's willing to blow up everybody and the whole planet to keep the Eye of the Thing from Cylon hands. Boomer lets Sharon know about Hera and Sharon goes less ballistic than you might think. Laura's like, "You don't know me! You don't \*\*\*\*in' know me!" Even Bill is kind of grossed out but it's not the hugest item on the agenda right now: there's algae on the line, and also the mystical magical artifact. Too bad Three's already put a bunch of Centurions on the planet, and also had a fairly gross discussion with Caprica about their ménage à trois and how Jesus doesn't really want her for a sunbeam after all. (Oh, and she's convinced that she's like This Close to reaching the Final Five. Just a couple more suicides before you qualify for that free calendar! Twelve months of Doral looking exactly the same in every possible month, except December when he's wearing a Santa hat. I would kill for this calendar. Hybrid says: "Concertina episodic repetitive Orangina with the fringe on top end of line.")

Also, Cally is totally cute and not horrible in any way, and the majority of the episode is like, "Remember Chief? He's so awesome. Remember? Sorry about leaving that part out all season." Of course, Lee has already figured out about Three's robot infiltration, and asks Anders -- who totally knows about Lee boning his wife and whose awesomeness has nothing to do with that crap -- to make an army of the civilians just like back home when he was nuts and bombing coffee shops. Speaking of: Starbuck notifies everybody about the Centurions, then gets shot down. Sam wants to go get her, Lee says no way, Sam says bite

me, and that's a cliffhanger: when in doubt, shoot down Starbuck over enemy space. Also cliffhangering: Gaeta, who figures out that the Algae Sun is seconds from supernova, and Bill, who would like to remind everybody about how he's going to nuke their asses to hell if they don't do just as he says. Hot: Three, as usual, and Laura, ditto. Not: Dualla's lame ass, Caprica's ditto. Next week: A MONTH FROM NOW.

**Recap:** Previously, Lee cheated on Dee with Kara, but then Kara married Sam because she has a lot of issues. A year and a half later they got okay again. Also, Sharon had a half-human baby, which Roslin kidnapped and lied about, which was later rescued by the Cylons. Additionally, Gaius got all caught up in Three's religious mania and hopes to be a Cylon saint, but nobody told Caprica that her threesome was quickly becoming a creepy suicidal culty twosome. Everybody was starving until Sharon found a planet full of algae and religious significance; not everybody survived the passage there.

Kara flies her Raptor down to the surface of the Algae Planet. It's been two weeks since Kat died and they made planetfall. Chief and Anders are being quite industrious with the civilians and Marines getting the processing plant completed; Chief hears the call of the Gods up on a high bluff but ignores it, chatting instead with Anders about how the Algae Planet smells gross and the resulting food is no more delicious than it smells. Until somebody finds the Hot Fudge Planet, Chief cracks, they're screwed. Overhead, Kara's Raptor comes in hot and wild.

Inside a bunker, Dualla's guessing it's Starbuck flying all crazy. "Third time this week. It's amazing how she keeps landing on the top of the pilot rotation." Lee notifies her that the donut runs are assigned on a coin flip, so Kara probably thinks she's just running a stream of bad luck. Yeah, "streams" tend to be bad luck for Kara Thrace. He heads out to debrief her and Dualla elects to "skip the meet-and-greet." I'm guessing that what is going to happen next is going to be Lee and Kara being pretty fucking gross, so that's probably best.

In Kara's Raptor, Lee and Kara commence being pretty fucking gross. And also totally transparent. Poor Dee. They start making out fiercely. It's not even really that hot anymore -- however hot it was, it is now much less hot than even that. I mean, they are

both married precisely to hurt each other, and now that they don't want to hurt each other anymore, it's kind of silly to still be married, but I don't know anything about marriage so I can posit that you stay married once you get married. Also that Kara will never divorce Sam as long as Lee's out there endangering her wildness or whatever. Still, they are gross.

Outside, Chief directs Cally to "start emptying the tents," so I guess the processing thing is almost done. He hears something magic again and stares up at the bluff.

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Apollo is whining about how he can barely look Dee in the eye these days, due to cheating on her and whatnot. He suggests getting divorces, which you know is not going to fly. A lot of this episode, though, is about who's religious and who isn't. Almost every storyline this episode, that's a huge deal, so let's review: Kara's the most religious person on the show. Maybe that used to be Chief, but [Cavil did a number on him](#), and I think also that that was not true to begin with and I just assumed that. But yeah, Kara loves the Gods: it's the main thing connecting her to Laura, and Laura's totally used it against her more than once. So Kara reacts very negatively to the suggestion about divorce, and Lee scoffs at her: "You said yourself, things were bad. Your marriage was failing." But marriage is a sacrament: "It's not a Pyramid game, you don't... you don't get do-overs, Lee. I made a vow in the sight of the Gods, and I'm not gonna break that." Lee kisses her and notes how she's breaking her vow whenever they get gross. She chuckles, because obviously it's not just the religious part that works for her here: "Divorce is different. This is just bending the rules." They make out for a second and then Lee hurls himself across the cabin and into a patented Lee Adama sonnet. "Every time I look at my wife, I see my own guilt reflected in her eyes." Kara makes fun of this crap and tells him not to make such a big deal out of it. It's funny, because they're in the opposite of their usual corners on this one: She's Little Miss Rules and Regs when it comes to religion, and he is drawing lines in the sand left and right. "Great. So, I won't divorce, and you won't cheat. So where does that leave us?" It leaves you gross, sad individuals in a pile of your own self-created filth and the corpses of innocent bystanders. Or as Lee would say it: "Trapped." I don't mind emo romantic pain or any of that, but when you start



getting your toxic stuff all over nice people like Dualla or Sam, it stops being intriguing and starts being malicious. But they're right in that I don't see a way out either.

Gaius Baltar dreams on a Basestar of Hera crying, Three's trips to Heaven and back, the possibility that he's a Cylon. He wakes up alone, to the sound of Hera crying, and goes to her room. Poor Boomer is trying to tend to her, but Hera knows damn well Boomer's not her mom. Boomer is distraught about this, of course, and worries about Hera's health. The second Gaius speaks, Hera starts to calm down. Even Hera comprehends Crazy Six Math better than me.

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Chief finally gives in to his feeling about the summit and climbs up the bluff: there's a huge underground temple with five pillars and five vaults in the ceiling, and a giant eye emblem on the floor. The score goes nuts. I'm starting to hate the number five almost as much as I used to hate twelve.

Credits; 41,402 souls in the Fleet. That's eighteen dead in the Passage. Could be worse. I miss Kat, though. I admire Kara's desire to soldier on fucking with herself in Kat's absence, but she's always been willing to do that. But without Kat around, who's going to explain to Lee and Kara that past the age of sixteen, making out in the backseat of your station wagon is a clear and present sign that you are being an asshole in some way.

Down in the Temple of Five, Chief is busy retconning the show's timeline for the eighty-seventh time: "Our initial radiocarbon dating suggests that the temple's at least 4,000 years old, which lines up with the exodus of the Thirteenth Tribe." Roslin asks if he's really thinking that's what this is, and Chief is pretty sure. "I recognize it from the books in my father's study, Madame President. He was a priest, and the Temple of Five was an important part of our faith. ... Well, his faith anyways." Maybe being an agnostic on Geminon was so weird -- especially from a family of priests -- that it explains how he came to the Fleet and why he was willing to put up with Boomer's crap for so long. That makes me love Chief again. I really like Chief and Cally in this episode. (I know.) Roslin wonders, from Adama's quarters, if

maybe this involves the Eye of Jupiter, which we know from last week that it does. "All I know is the stuff I kinda remember from sneaking into my dad's study when he wasn't looking." Adama asks for a prÃ©cis on the Eye, and Chief obliges: yet another path marker left behind by the Thirteenth Tribe. The alarms go wild and Adama signs off with Tyrol; Gaeta summons the Admiral and Laura to the CIC. "We have multiple dradis contacts: four Cylon baseships just jumped into view." They hustle out the door.

As the four baseships jump in near the Galactica, Adama and Roslin enter CIC demanding sitrep. Tigh's amazed about how the bastards have just totally balls-out jumped into the middle of the Fleet. Adama hoshis the Fleet to jump to emergency coordinates, and they do. Adama realizes that Galactica has to hold her position until the people on the surface get back. Roslin is minorly worried about them, but more so the Eye, which she does not want the Cylons getting. Adama puts the Vipers on standby; Tigh notices that the basestars aren't launching any Raiders: just hanging around outside weapons range. Roslin agrees that this is odd behavior for killer robots from outer space. Hoshi nervously tells the Admiral that they're hailing him, and Adama sternly takes the call. It's Gaius. Everybody makes faces that suggest they've smelled something not only nasty but also enraging. "Admiral, I can't tell you what a genuine pleasure it is to hear your voice. This is Gaius Baltar."

Later, a Cylon shuttle lands on Galactica, and the negotiation party is escorted toward a conference room. From the other direction come Roslin and Adama, with Gaeta and Tigh. Roslin's weirded out about how they're allowing Cylons onboard, but doesn't make too much of a stink about it because she can't remember the last time she airlocked a motherfucker, and this might involve Gaius Baltar. Which is like infinity points in her private airlocking championship. "They must want something pretty bad, or else they would have started shooting as soon as they jumped in," Adama grits. Roslin wonders why on Earth they would send Baltar with the negotiating party. Anytime anybody says his name in this episode, imagine angry spittle flying out of your computer screen. Twice as much if it's Laura. "He can say whatever he wants," Adama reasons. "The longer he talks, the more time we have to get Lee and his people off the planet."

Boomer, Biers, Cavil, and Gaius are escorted through the corridor. Boomer stares at the hallways, equal parts unimpressed, weirded out, and remembering that time she got shot and died calling Chief's name. Gaius is similarly divided, but he's got a Chip Six to discuss it with and doesn't have to rely on nonverbal communication to get across everything Grace Park just did. (Me: "That's Boomer, remember I told you about her?" Alison: "How do you know?" Me: "The way she walks." Alison: "That's awesome.") Six asks if it's feeling "like old times," and Gaius admits how much he misses Galactica. Aww, that makes me sad. He really makes me sad in this episode. Six points out that "they"/Roslin would airlock him so fast and then celebrate, and he knows that, but he still feels like he's home. Six points out that if he's a Final Fiver, that would just be part of his cover. (Is that confirmation that the Final Five are possibly sleepers in the Colonies? For some reason I thought that wasn't true, like, they just weren't around at all. Or only in Heaven. I like it better, though. Ooh, I hope it's Gaeta, Gaius, Kara, Laura, and Adama! That would be so fucked up! And Lee would feel just awful!) But if he's not a Cylon, Gaius says sadly, then this is his last chance to see his people again.

Outside the conference room, Sharon recognizes Boomer from the way she walks and notifies Colonel Tigh immediately. "The one who shot the old man? Well, you just lost your visiting privileges. Hold that thing here until we get back." Aaand that's why I still love Boomer, even though she's not around much anymore: Nature Girl didn't even have a chance. She's actually more innocent than like anybody on this show. She stayed in [that apartment on Old Caprica](#) half-wishing she could go home, doing chin-ups and driving herself crazy; she watched DEMAND LOVE go to hell all around her and she still tried to [comfort Cally](#); she was created to love and be loved in return, and she's gotten rejected by every single person she's tried to love. Including Hera. The Marines cock guns on her and Tigh orders the rest of the negotiation party to keep moving. Biers gives Sharon a look as sheâ€™s entering; then they're all alone in the hallway. (Alison: "Oh, girl.")

Inside the conference room, Gaius is in tears, looking at Laura Roslin. She won't meet his eyes. Adama puts himself physically between them, standing impassive as the tears well up and he tries to tell her how good it is to see her. He's not lying. He's always wanted her approval even more than Adama's. She

doesn't look up and Adama doesn't look away; his heart breaks a little bit, and he steps back in line with the other Cylons. "The weapons are hardly necessary," smirks Biers, and Cavil's hilariously nasty: "Yes, exactly. We come in peace." Roslin demands to know what they want, and Biers levels. "We want the Eye of Jupiter. So let's just skip all the denials and protestations, and go straight to what we know -- that you have people on the ground. And we know that youâ€™ve found the original settlement of the Thirteenth Tribe." Cavil notes that obviously they didn't jump away because they've located the artifact but haven't yet retrieved it; Roslin will only admit to staying by their people on the ground. Cavil's not buying that that is the only reason. Gaius sticks his big stupid greasy head into it, pointing out the wildly improbable (I'm saying!) coincidence of them all showing up. The only thing that would make sense is if Athena's acting on the same truth/whatever as both the Hybrid and Chip Six, which I don't really like because it suggests that she'll never be fully her own person, and I like her too much for that. "You want the Eye, the Cylons want the Eye. I would like to discuss the practical issues that come to hand -- and there are some -- so that we can reach some accommodation." Adama clenches his fist, I imagine; I've always thought he was just a tad more offended by Gaius's squirrely behavior and pathological addiction to fucking up than his continual role in the ongoing destruction of mankind.

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Roslin still refuses to look at Gaius: "The less this man says, the better this will go." He starts his usual bitch and moan about how if it weren't for him, the Cylons would have blown up Galactica the second they got there, which I don't even get how he's rationalizing that one, and Roslin almost spits at him. "I think you can handle this alone," she murmurs to Bill. "If you can stomach it." She bounces, leaving behind her a cloud of Chanel No. 5 that smells a lot like unearned moral superiority. Gaius just screams and screams, trying to convince her that he's a hero. Still. "So I've saved your life...again. How many times is that now? Because I'm beginning to lose count. If it wasn't for me, you'd all be dead!" Whatever, dude. [At length](#) we have already talked about this, but does he listen? He does not. Adama asks what their offer is, already, and Biers offers to let the Fleet go if they give up the Eye. Cavil throws in Gaius into the bargain, which horrifies Gaius

but which Three grins about: "Indeed!" Cavil asks Adama to admit that he and Laura would enjoy a little Two Minutes' Hate action with Gaius, and Tigh and Adama agree that it's at least worth thinking about. Which is awesome, because they don't really even want him, they just love the fact that he totally just peed a little.

You're Sharon, looking at Boomer. She's the girl that took the fall, the girl they manufactured to get broken. She's the girl you can't even hate, and when people call you by her name you just look down and say sadly, "[That was someone else.](#)" She's the warped mirror that says you could have been her, and inside you somewhere there's a voice still saying, "We love you, Sharon." She's your [Sasha](#), and your Kacey, and your secret Young Kara. She's the thing you ran from on Old Caprica and the thing you're still running from, and she's looking at you.

You're Boomer, looking at Sharon. She's the girl that won the race, wearing the uniform you used to wear, the girl the Admiral adores and the girl who could quiet Hera's crying if she were there. She's the original, you're the copy. You almost got boxed for trying to pretend you were this girl, on Old Caprica, and every dream you wish you didn't have at night, every fantasy you wish you didn't entertain anymore: she's living them. She's a commissioned officer and a beloved pilot. Everybody that you wanted to love you, everybody that turned on you when you were so confused you couldn't even begin to figure out your broken life, all those people now love her instead. The acceptance you were denied, she glories in. Her life isn't broken, it's gloriously fixed. That impossible balance you could never walk, between human and Cylon, she's walking it with strength and beauty. She's denying you free movement in the halls that you used to call home. She's standing on the ground where you died and looking at you with pity and love; nobody wants the embarrassment of absolution. She's everything you ever wanted, in the worst possible way.

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"Despite that uniform, it's not your home anymore," Boomer says. She's not really talking to Sharon, even. Sharon says calmly that she's made her choice, that she knows where her loyalties lie: both of these are things Boomer never got to have. She

comes closer, striking past the uniform, since that didn't hurt enough: "What if I told you that your daughter was still alive?" Sharon shakes her head: is it really going down like this? Is Boomer this classless and mean? "Well, someone's lying. But it's not me. Hera's alive. At least for now." And with a little extra: "She's ill, and we don't know why." Sharon chokes, she's getting to her, but she's staying strong: "Yeah, right." Boomer grins a nasty high school grin, a Mean Girl grin, as she twists the knife. Cylons can be cruel now, but they still never lie. "Baltar found her on New Caprica during the evacuation. She's on our baseship right now. From what we could gather, she was hidden at Laura Roslin's school, which means that she probably planned the whole thing in the first place." Which, she doesn't say, means that the Admiral must've known too. Mommy and Daddy don't love you, and they never did. Sharon takes off: "I don't need to listen to this." She tells the Marines to watch Boomer, who screams as she's leaving, "They let you think that she was dead. You don't do that to a person, you do that to a thing. That's what your friends think of you, Sharon. You're not one of them. You're a thing!" She's only kind of talking to Sharon even now.

"We're not giving you the key to finding Earth," says Adama flatly. The Cylons having reached third grade at least in their emotional development, Biers goes for the triple dog dare: "You try bringing it up from that planet and see what happens." Adama (I would venture a guess that this is another EJO thing; no director would put the marks this close together) gets right in her face: "I'm setting the terms now. Make any attempt to attack this ship or the people on the planet's surface, I'll launch every nuke I've got. Lay waste to the entire continent." Everybody on both sides goes OMG and then immediately recovers. Three accuses him of bluffing -- "You want to find Earth as much as we do," she says, which with Adama may or may not be true at any given time -- and Adama orders the guards to escort the Cylons back to their shuttle. Party over. The Marines move out and Gaius stares back at Bill, pleading and breaking down in tears, hoping against futile hope that things will get magical with a quickness, that the Admiral will forgive him in this moment (Baltar psychology is based on projection), but of course there's no magic for Gaius today, and no hugs either. Cavil exits last, with a creepy leer.



Apollo and Roslin! Talking! As though they've met before! Roslin's like, "Lee, I don't know what it looks like, sorry." Bill tells him that whether or not it exists or is real or whatever, they still have to protect it from the Cylons. "If it looks like they're going to get into the Temple, your order is to blow it." NO, NO, NO. You do not blow up the Temple, you do not hide guns in the Temple, you do not frack in the Temple, you do not roughhouse or engage in horseplay in the Temple. War is so damned awful. The wireless goes crazy with high-pitched static, leaving Lee and Kara alone in her Raptor with a dead radio. "The Cylons are jamming the wireless," Starbuck confirms. "Every frequency." Apollo immediately shifts into Major Mode, laying out the game plan: work on comms and get a plan together to cover Tyrol while he keeps looking. Starbuck notes that there are maybe a dozen Marines and as many as five military on the planet, and Apollo decides they have to draft civilians. Meaning, Starbuck realizes immediately, that Sam's about to get deputized. Apollo's like this: "What? No! Frack that! What a horrible idea... that we totally have to do. Dammit."

Anders enters a bunker meeting and greets Lee. Things are going great for five seconds until Starbuck greets him, and Anders gets bitchy. "Heard you were coming down. Guess it takes an emergency to get us in the same room these days." Which, and this is important, is the opposite corollary to "no guns in the Temple," which is "no crying in baseball," and something that Anders has no reason to understand, but which really takes a beating in this episode. Right now they're in a military op with shit resources and no air support: what this means for Apollo and Starbuck (and Dee) is that "Lee" and "Kara" as concepts are not applicable. You do not get personal during an operation like this. And what sucks is that Apollo and Starbuck get this on such a fundamental level that they don't even know to explain it, so all their reactions to Anders bringing up personal shit just cause him to feel even more crapped on. I really love this whole fascinating dynamic, most especially because it would never occur to me either, but also because the ease with which Lee and Kara shift into wartime makes me respect them a bit more this week, which they needed. There's a reason they've both been CAG, you know? Not that Kara's great at staying Starbuck in these situations -- and watch for Dualla to make her look like a wartime asshole ten-year-old in about three seconds -- but Anders doesn't even have

the concept in his repertoire. So when Starbuck asks, "Can we do this later, please?" it's not because she's pulling a [Joey Potter](#): it's because this is war.

"Sam, I need you to command the civilians, form them into fire teams. I'll give my deployment orders through Sergeant... " Gunny Mathias! Yeah! Anders holds up a hand: "Whoa, whoa, whoa. Deployment orders? Fire teams? Come on, some of these guys have never even held a rifle before!" Apollo asks if he isn't in fact a fabulous guerrilla soldier from irradiated Old Caprica and the battle of the coffee shop, and Anders explains the difference: "Hit and run. Keep moving, keep the enemy off balance. I've never had to defend a fixed position, that's a whole different game." Which is another angle on the "no crying in baseball" theme, because: you've been picked for this op, and therefore you will do it, because we're on military time: "You're just gonna have to learn it fast, because that's what we're doing, we're defending this fixed position. Until the Chief finds his Eye of Jupiter." (I dorked out a little bit about the whole "defending a fixed position" deal and how it also pertains to the whole Quadrangle of Bad Ideas About Love, but I'll spare you because it's pretty obvious.) Anders is not feeling this, considering how they're supposed to be risking their lives for something Lee and Kara haven't even found yet (still not drawing parallels to the romantic complications), and Lee levels. "Listen, Sam, I'm not even sure it exists." Still keeping that lip zipped. "But I don't have to tell you every little Godsdamn detail... " Out of nowhere Anders jumps in and connects the dots himself: "You know what you have to explain to me?" Oh, snap! Starbuck jumps in between them and puts her hands on his chest: "Hey, hey, hey. Honey -- the Major's in charge on this one, okay?" She gives him a very serious "just work with me here" kind of look. "Okay?" He snits off, but it's obvious he's getting it. Apollo whines about how that didn't go so great, but Starbuck knows Anders is in, and that he'll get the job done, because he's awesome.

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Temple of Five, where Cally (of course) is affixing bomb charges to the central pillar. She comes to Chief for comfort about how she misses her child, and I'm not calling bullshit on that, and also she really looks cute. "He's fine. He's on Galactica. He's fine." Chief breathes. "I hated everything about the faith. The rules, the

rituals. The endless discussions at the dinner table. I used to sneak into my mom's prayer room, you know, Holiest of the Holies. I would dance around naked with porn magazines, just to defy the Gods and tell them to frack off." Cally chuckles. Me too. "I mean, I don't even know how I found this place. I just got this urge to start walking. And then, suddenly, there it is." Cally looks up at him like a spaniel: "You should see the look on your face when you're in here. There's this...reverence. You even talk softer." He can feel it. He's the only one that can. "I feel something in here. Something true. But here I am setting charges in this special place. Holiest of the Holies. This is... the Temple of Five. If my parents could see this...and I'm gonna blow it up." See, that's all I asked back on New Caprica: do what you've gotta do, but get right with yourself about why you're doing it, and the fact that you're killing something precious when you do it. Just take responsibility. Thank you, Chief. I love you again.

Not that I honestly think the Fleet's going to have anything to do with the Temple blowing up, vide this very paragraph -- I just get antsy about guns in the Temple. On CIC, Gaeta's noticed some anomalies in the solar radiation belt, as one does, and of course next made an analysis of the star's vibrational modes. "Sure enough, it appears to be highly unstable. If you can believe it, on the verge of going supernova." When? Maybe tomorrow, maybe next year. "There's no way of knowing for sure, sir. When it does happen, the only warning that we're likely to get is a fast helium flash, at which point we'll have to jump out of here before it obliterates the entire planetary system." So I'm guessing that's next episode, duh. "Sir, I am not one to look for religious signs, but I can't get my head around these odds. That human and Cylon both converge on this planet at this exact moment just as the star's about to go supernova..." Crazy, right? Am I out of my gourd that I keep blaming Chip Six for all of this? "I'm not a religious person, Mr. Gaeta, as you both know. So if this is the work of a higher power then they have one hell of a sense of humor." Because if there's one thing we can take away from this series, it's that God's sense of humor is not at all fucked up.

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On the Basestar is a scene that is very hard to explain to my friend Alison, because all the Cylons now have awesomely individual agendas and areas of interest that rely on the last four

years of continuity. Which is fabulous! Cavil calls their standoff predicament "predictable" and outlines the stakes with machine logic. Leoben wants to be sure Galactica's not bluffing, because of the import of the Eye and Thrace possibly being down there, and Gaius stresses that they have no way of knowing so they should not blow up Galactica or more humans. The Threes, of course, don't want to take the chance. Cavil wants to wipe the Fleet into the Recycle Bin while they have the chance: perfect robot universe, clean of humanity. Caprica doesn't want to think about the fate of humanity anymore, and wants to focus on the Eye and on Earth. Cavil wants to remind everybody, again, that they are machines, and can spend the next gazillion years looking for Earth, whereas the humans are there to get sporked right that second. Caprica shakes her head at this, because God is Love and she will be saying it's possible to coexist long after even Jacob gives up on the idea. "Or we could stand here and do nothing," Cavil snots. "We're not doing nothing, Cavil. Plans are in motion," says Biers portentously. Gaius does his fifth double-take of the episode. Poor over-his-head little fucker. Caprica is also intrigued shading into pissed at this, and calls her lover D'Anna. "I put a Heavy Raider down on the planet's surface as soon as we jumped in," Three says in that icy scary way she has. "I thought that would be our best chance of slipping by their dradis. It seems I was right." Caprica, who's having a whole thing about Three and Gaius anyway, and hates not having all the information she can, asks why the frell she didn't tell everybody else about the decision. "It was a need-to-know mission. So now I am telling you, because you need to know. The point is, we have cut off their troops' communications, and we've put our own troops on the ground. So as soon as our Centurions retrieve the eye, you can take out Galactica." Caprica and Gaius stare at each other and wig out for awhile, while down on the surface her Centurions disembark.

"Okay, here's the deal. We're out of options. The Cylons have got us pinned on this rock, and our only way out of here is to hold this place until Galactica can send a rescue party. So I've divided you into two teams, okay? Team one is gonna be distributing ammunition throughout the camp. Team two is gonna be making homemade tylium mines. I know that's not glamorous work, but we're going to need the extra firepower in case the Cylons decide to take a shot at us. Look, I know some of you are scared. And

that's okay, 'cause I'm scared too. But if we keep our heads, and we do our jobs, we can do this. And we can all get out of here in one piece. Now, Barolay [Finally somebody said it out loud!] has a list of your names and your assignments. Make sure you get with her. See you outside." That was a lot of talking to do in one take, and Anders did it well. Apollo congratulates him -- still on military time -- about how honest and clear the speech was. "You'd make a good officer." Anders cocks a gun and is not on any kind of military time at all. "Officer, huh? Like you? Someone who swears an oath, and knows how to keep it?" Apollo tries to half-ass his reply in order to be gross some more, and Anders goes off. "Don't insult me, okay? I'm not stupid. I know how she is. We've been married for a year and a half. What, do you think you're the first?" WOW. Do you think that's true? I wouldn't put it past her, but that seems very Saul/Ellen and I don't know that we need to parallel them more than we already have. "I chose to marry Kara. That's my business. I don't know what the hell you think you're trying to do." And that's military time in a nutshell: "I'm trying to fight a war," Apollo says, exasperated. "I'm trying to get these people off this rock in one piece." No crying in baseball. "Anything for the cause, Major." I don't blame Anders, of course, and I don't blame him for not understanding that Lee/Kara is off the table today, but it's really frustrating to be on this side of the screen where you can't give him a hug and explain to him about how everybody has to be a Tin Man today or else nobody lives. And then, you know. Another hug. Maybe some spooning.

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Hybrid chamber. "...I don't care if it rains or freezes, as long as... the five lights of the apocalypse rising scenes revealed only to those who enter the temple only to the chosen one the chosen one the chosen one the chosen one the chosen one the chosen one the chosen one end of line. Until next time... the eye the eye the eye look into the eye to know thyself." (Hee! "You're a whipping boy, raised by mongrels and set on a sacrificial slab.") Again, we have the liquid imagery, an interesting "apocalypse" mention, the five lights, an interesting juxtaposition of "the chosen one"/"end of line," which admittedly might be only syntactical but makes me worry about my girl Three, and that last phrase, which would seem to already apply to Chief. Most interesting is that Three's about to quote the Hybrid in such a way that either she wasn't listening, which is

awesome, or else she's just actually quoting her, which means she's that much closer to nuts.

"Gaius, I am on the verge of seeing the faces of the Final Five Cylons. Maybe the face of God himself." Baltar stares, then touches her arm reverently. "The Five await me. Gaius, I'm so close to knowing the truth." Caprica walks in, asking what "truth" she's going after; Three is less than thrilled to see her but hides it just as well as ever. You could almost believe she entered this threesome just to get Gaius, as bisexual neighbors have been doing since the beginning of time in your less attractive apartment complexes and duplexes. Caprica's fed up: "I'd like to think that we three have shared something. Transcended the barriers that separate people. And yet, somehow, the more time goes on, the more I find myself on the outside looking in." (Alison: "WHAT?! You've just figured out that your deep and meaningful threesome is silly and worthless? What next, you stop buying lottery scratch-offs?") Gaius stutters about their deep and meaningful threesome, and Three cuts him off: "We're finished. Baltar's and my destiny lie separate from yours, Caprica." Shocked, Caprica and Gaius gape at each other as Biers heads for the door. Come on, Caprica knows him better than anybody -- she had to know this was going to happen. She has to know he's about to make the worst possible choice. "The five lights will only be revealed to those who enter the Temple," says Three, whistling and tapping her thigh at Gaius ("Who's a good whipping boy? Yes sir, that's my little man!"), who comes running. "We have to go down to the planet. Only you and I can see this through."

Caprica begs her to know what they're after, just completely wrong-footed and screwed over again. Created to love and be loved in return, and rising always toward Heaven, always closer to the mind of God. Suddenly betrayed and left on the ground. I loooove Caprica. "You have to tell me the truth. I love you both!" Like that's ever resulted in truthiness. "We love you too," says Three. "But this is something you cannot share with us." Caprica's mind is blown. "Something I can't share with you?" She's not just losing Gaius, not just losing Three: she's losing God and destiny and big-L Love. "I loved you when everyone else wanted you dead!" she shouts at Gaius. Which is... so very close to what he was screaming at Roslin yesterday, isn't it. I find this whole thing heartbreaking. "Now, look, you mustn't misunderstand. It's not



personal. It's transcendent. It's like what you said: it's transcendent." He and Three bounce, Three asking her to pray for them. "We'll be praying for you." (Shit on your pray for you, is what I would say at this point.) Gaius gives -- again -- one teary look back, leaving behind one more home. Caprica: is very sad and can't believe it, is self-accusatory and exasperated, asks God if He's possibly doing this, thinks about committing suicide a billion times herself, and then accepts it with a sound like a box clicking closed. She does these things, The Five Stages Of Getting Dumped By Your Boyfriend, Your Girlfriend And God Himself, in record time. This is because she is a robot. Robots get an extra stage, though, which is called Fucking Everybody Up So Very, Very Bad, and that's my favorite stage and I cannot wait, if I'm right. Caprica for the win.

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Dualla lays out the op in the surface bunker: "Okay, he wants us to set up forward observation posts that are hard-wired back to base for communications. The ops are gonna be staggered at strategic locations, giving us as much warning as possible, if there is a Cylon advance. Since we only have one Raptor, Captain Thrace will fly point." Dualla's on military time, Starbuck is an asshole: "Oh, joy." Dualla ignores her, but with Lee and the whole Adama clan, I think Dee's on military time more often than not. She's still a fucking class act right now. "Wireless is dead, so if you do make contact, do not engage. Have them relay the information back to command. Be sure to note force strength, direction of march, and position." I don't know what those words mean but I suddenly want to kiss Dualla on the lips. "I have flown recon once or twice, Lieutenant," spits Starfuck. Dualla lays out three different observation posts -- including a conscript named I think "Ditko," which is like a [Chrismukkah](#) present especially for all of three viewers, including me -- and asks the Captain if she has a problem with the outlined op. The Captain does not. They head out.

Out in the field, Dualla is saying more awesome words: "Green Base, Foxfire One. Green Base, Foxfire One. We are open for business. Over." Good old Foxfire, I wish that was her call sign. Up above, Starbuck's flying recon, she spots the Centurions almost immediately and sends back visual: "Son of a bitch! Tell me you're seeing this..." Down below, Dualla relays the

Centurion thing, and then sees as Starbuck gets hit. Badly. She calls it out over whatever they're using for comms, and Starbuck goes down. In flames. Any other week this would be an effective act-out, but I'm a little peeved with her today.

Adama enters what I guess is Roslin's temporary office on Galactica, looking stern as hell. She doesn't notice, because she's reading the Scriptures. Which always results in good stuff, doesn't it? "There's really not much more on the Eye in these scriptures, but there's several interesting stories about the Temple. Listen to this: 'Five pillars of the Temple were fashioned after the five priests devoted to the one whose name cannot... '" (Color me very interested, because that's some serious syncretist possibility going on right there.) He finally interrupts her, with the face I call The Could You Please Stop Stealing Elections And Committing Genocide And Suspending Roe/Wade For Like Five Seconds Face. But at least he calls her Laura. "The Cylon we know as Boomer arrived with the others." Laura's face falls; she already knows. The glasses come off, which is of course [Giles](#) for Fuuuuuck. "She told our Sharon that her child was alive, and that she was on board one of the Cylon baseships. And that she had been seen on New Caprica in your school." She speaks softly. "The child is alive, yes. Yes, the child was at the school. Yes, I kept her there." He sits down, waiting for the apology and the appeal to fix it. "And we suspected that the Cylons captured her during the exodus from New Caprica. Yes, it's true." He looks at her, waiting for the shoe to drop. Waiting for the chance to offer absolution. If she said right now that it was the worst thing she ever did, he could forgive her. She wouldn't be wrong. "Listen, the thing you might want to know is that when sh... " He abruptly rises, and leaves. Wrong answer; she watches him leave and she knows it. Rough.

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In the Agathon quarters, Helo is very quiet and very still, and very tall. Sharon's barely there at all. "Do you have any idea what we've gone through?" asks Helo, speaking slowly. "You, of all people, know... what it's like to lose a child." Adama spreads his hands. "The difference is your child's still alive. And eventually, I hope you become grateful of that." Thank God he didn't know. I was so scared he was in on it. Helo goes to Sharon and she holds up a hand, describes a wall between herself and everybody else;

when she looks at Adama her eyes are clear. "I want to see her."

Apollo notifies Anders that his wife has gone down, somewhere in the north valley. "Get your men on the line. They're coming from the north." Anders, still not on military time -- and it's Kara, and it's not like even the Admiral usually dealt with her in military time, historically -- asks about the search party. Apollo's sympathetic, but informs him that there's no manpower available; Anders is getting it coming and going this week! What good is your wife cheating on you if her boyfriend won't help you save her? "Lee, she could be dying out there." Apollo is clear on that. Calls him Sam. "But we are thin on the ground here, and the Cylons are on the march. We can't help her. We have to hold our positions." Anders is of the opinion that Lee has gone crazy. From here, it's the only sane thing he's done since, like, Billy died.

More Heavy Raiders head for the surface; Tigh spots them. Roslin's confused: "I don't get it. They'd have to know we see them." Adama is so giving her the cold shoulder, like, he can't even look at her or talk to her. He's like, "Did you hear something?" Tigh figures out that they're testing the bluff about nuking the planet. "Well, unfortunately we are bluffing," says Roslin, and if he could look at her right now he'd be giving her such an O RLY: "Are we. Mr. Hoshi? Order nuclear ground-strike missiles in launch tubes four through ten." Hoshi calls it in. Roslin gapes.

In the bunker, Mathias is trying to get Anders on military time: "The Major's right. We don't have any troops to spare if we're gonna hold this position." Anders says the position can go frack itself, they can take to the hills and go guerrilla like he's been saying. "Well, that is not the mission," says Little Miss Rules and Regs. "We have our orders." Anders calls him a "wind-up tin soldier," but stupidly reminds Lee that Kara's his wife, taking him off military time with a quickness. "I know who she is! And I have known her and cared about her a hell of a lot longer than you!" Anders explains loudly that Apollo can do whatever the hell he likes, but Anders is outta there.

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Adama gaetas the launch tube doors open, and Roslin's hilarious, frankly: "What are you doing?" Adama explains in no less funny

terms: "Getting ready to nuke the planet." I love how even now there's a slight civilian-time kind of "fuck you" in there somewhere.

Gathered around the Basestar command center Jell-O, Six detects radiologicals: the missile doors have been hoshi'd. Cavil swears he's bluffing, because the only thing dumber than religious icons is people.

Apollo sics Gunny Mathias on Sam as Chief stares at the eye in the Temple.

Roslin asks if Adama's really prepared to sacrifice their son; he totally ignores her and sets ground zero for the underground structure. And there's a little bit of Roslin's religious stuff and the Lie of Earth tangential to the power plays going on here. I love it.

Eight worries as the nukes get more and more ready. Cavil repeats that it's a bluff, and Leoben says the risk is too great; begs consensus to turn back the Raiders. Consensus used to be so easy. A Three says imperiously that the ships cannot turn back: "He won't launch it. And D'Anna was explicit that she and Baltar make it to the planet's surface." Caprica nods, pissily: "So is that what all this is really about?" Oh, girl.

"And the heavens opened up, and they saw the Eye. But where is that fracking Eye?" asks Chief. I'm not convinced he isn't the Chosen One.

Sam asks Lee if he's kidding with this crap. "Are you gonna shoot me now?" Please. No more than Dualla was happy to see Kara go down. "I can't let you go. I need you on the line. I need you commanding those civilians. I'm sorry, Sam, but you cannot go." Sam apologizes to the Major: "You can't stop me."

Adama authorizes release of nuclear weapons. ("I'm blowing up my men." Heh.) Tigh acknowledges the order; Roslin stares. To be continued in January. Boom boom boom. Or I guess hopefully not, in this case.

# NURTURE GIRL

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 12 | Aired on 01.20.2007

*Rapture (2)* - The season starts with a bit of the old ultraviolence as Cylons and Colonists -- and the tiny cult of Baltar and Biers -- converge on the Temple of Five, resulting in Hera getting babynapped for the eighth time, Boomer turning her back on *Galactica* once and for all, and Three finally seeing the Five Cylons You Meet In Heaven, then getting boxed.

**Recaplet:** When last we met our Rag-Tag Fleet, they were in a standoff about the Temple of Five down on the Algae Planet, Boomer was taking pot-shots at Athena's living situation, and Three finally made her move to break up the Happy Threesome, heading down toward the Temple while Anders and Apollo squabbled over whether Starbuck was going to be killed by robots. This weekâ All those things are taken care of. It's pretty exciting and very well done, with some pretty high emotional points and an interesting start for this new chapter of the story. Lee calms Sam down about Kara by sending Dee (!) to save her. The only person less interested in this storyline than your average viewer. Of course she does it, because she's Dee, and somehow manages not to look like a total chump in the process, because she is Dee. Kara gets through the experience through massive amounts of drugs and getting slapped around, because she's Kara. Chief tries for a million years to figure out the mysterious Eye of Jupiter, but it is, of course, the supernova itself, which shows up just in time for everybody to get away safe. The Cylon party -- Three, Gaius, and Cavil all of a sudden -- gets control of the Temple for the second before it blows up, but it's a pretty big second: Cavil betrays Three, but Gaius shoots him dead before it gets too serious. But then she dies anyway, from Seeing the Face of God poisoning. When she resurrects, she's told that being a nutsack is not in the specs, and the Three model is boxed altogether. GONE. Making her like the Galileo or Socrates of Cylons, which is fucking rad. While she's getting that done to her, Chief pistol-whips Gaius and takes him back to *Galactica* for trial. Guess who else is heading there? Oh, Caprica Six. Guess why? Because Helo shot Athena to death after she ordered him to, so that she could resurrect on the baseship and get close to Hera. Roslin actually tries to bitch at him about this, and he almost eats her face off. Poor old Boomer is not feeling

motherhood at all, and has managed to let Hera get pretty sick, in addition to making clear she's turned her back on humanity forever; she then threatens to snap the baby's neck, but gets her own neck snapped instead. By Caprica, who like invented neck-snapping in the first place. She helps Athena escape and they return to Galactica together. Hopefully, her friendship with this model Eight will turn out better than last time, when it resulted in humanity being put in a concentration camp. Goodbye, Three. I will always love you. Next week: Plus the Trial of Gaius Baltar begins, along with mysteries like: How come Kara was painting the Eye of Jupiter back in her old Caprican apartment? What will happen to Athena and Caprica? Will Lee and Dualla and Sam and Kara ever figure their stuff out? Will anyone ever care?

**Recap:** An Eight, I believe and hope it's my Boomer, gives us the previouslies. There was a lot going on, at the end of 3.0, so let's review: Kat died getting us to the Algae Planet, where a Temple was found that seemed to have spiritual significance for both the Cylons and the Colonists. Isn't it weird when you find out the terrorists worship the same God you do? I hate thinking about that stuff, don't you? Lee and Kara were semi-cheating, which is to say they were cheating, but Kara wanted to go All the Way and Lee was all for getting a divorce, but Kara wasn't feeling it. They are both idiots. Then Kara's Raptor went down during the big nuclear standoff between Adama and the Cylons, and Lee and Sam were fighting about how best to deal with this. Boomer went all Mean Girl on Sharon about the baby, and Chief got hit in the head with some childhood religious memories. Meanwhile, Three was convinced her totally scary religious journey was leading her to the Temple and broke up her fake threesome with Caprica and Gaius in order to find out for sure. There are Cylon Raiders headed for the surface, and Adama's got his finger on the button, ready to blow the whole Temple to kingdom come; also the actual sun is about to go nova... And yet it wasn't all that thrilling, from what I remember. That was a long time ago. This episode is way better, and/or happening right now.

In the Galactica CIC, Roslin's watching as Adama talks the crew through the steps of nuclear annihilation. Nobody's really all that excited about blowing up their people and the Temple, but they're doing what they have to, now that Adama's gotten into this cockfight with Three and Cavil. Everybody's waiting for



everybody else to blink. On the Basestar, Leoben (and the rest of the ones you always see) is standing with his hand in the puddle of infogoo, advising to pull the Raiders back before Adama blows the Temple. Eight agrees immediately, and even Cavil isn't willing to risk the Temple. Six agrees, because she has that religious weirdness -- and if this is Caprica Six, which I think it is, she has an investment in wrecking Biers's first date with Gaius as well. The Three in the Basestar command doesn't say a thing, just stares and waits for God to fix this.

Also playing chicken are Anders and Apollo, down on the planet. Sam wants to go save Kara himself, but Apollo won't let him. I don't even remember why, and at this point it's not important. I would hate to say that it's because Sam's too important for the Temple defense, with his guerilla skills, but I don't know about that line of reasoning, given what comes next. Anders offers to throttle Lee if anything happens to her, and Lee assures him that if she dies out there, he'll willingly let Sam kill him. Anders postures about how you can't very well follow him around with a gun every second, and that he's still going to save Kara. Lee tells a private to get Dualla on the line. Oh, dear. I see where he's coming from -- that whole military time issue from last episode -- but... there's not a single other person you could give this operation to? In all the Fleet, you gotta send your wife to save your girlfriend? Yep. "Do you have eyeballs on Starbuck's position?" She's hunkered down at an observation post and can't see the Raptor itself, but there's a (huge) plume of smoke coming up from the Raptor a few clicks away. "Can you get to the Raptor?" he asks; she says she doesn't know. (What she means is: "Suck my dick, sir.") "It's pretty far away. There's minimal cover." (What she means is: "Military time or not, do not ask me to do this.") He asks again if it's doable, and she repeats that she doesn't know. What she means is: "Fine, I'll go save your frackin' girlfriend so she can wreck your marriage and/or shoot you some more." And if she doesn't, I'll volunteer.

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In CIC, Tigh's turning his launch key; on the Basestar Three's begging them to chill: "They want the key to finding Earth as much as we do. He won't just destroy it." Leoben shakes his head, intensely: "We spoke, and the decision's been made." Three doesn't say anything, but puts her hands in the gel, and it

goes red and scary looking. I don't know enough about the Cylons to know what she just did, but I think she sent them an email to do something anatomically incorrect to their own peripheral ports. And being Cylons, they receive it in record time. Oh, no, I see it on the dradis in CIC: she just recalled all the Raiders but the one carrying Biers and Gaius. Wow, that's ballsy. Adama and Gaeta are confused; the other Cylons are as well. I guess she told them she was going to do that, though. She repeats to Eight that there's no way he'll launch against just one ship, and Leoben puts his robot foot down. "That's not the issue. We made a decision. D'Anna has to turn back." Three demurs; Six -- now I'm sure it's Caprica -- orders her to Bluetooth Biers and Gaius around and bring them home with a quickness. Three is solid as steel: "No." Caprica's jaw drops. "What do you mean, no?" She is calm. "This is something that we have to do. He won't launch over one ship. You'll see." Still not the issue, especially with Caprica, but I guess we'll see.

"You want me...you want me to rescue Captain Thrace?" Dualla's pretty much disbelieving at this point, even though she knows she's going to do it. He repeats the order and she signs off. "Foxfire One, out." She turns to hottie Sergeant of the Guard Omar Fischer -- he was the one, remember, who [took control after Boomer shot the Admiral](#), so long ago; he's been around -- and clips out a short "We go." I gotta say, Foxfire's pretty much the queen of this episode. I like the writer's take on the character, but the acting is really, really complex and beautiful. Brittle, angry, forthright, dedicated to duty, strong, funny and willing to fight for her family. Hooray for Kandyse McClure, or the billion other ways you can spell her name. So talented, so lovely and real. I haven't loved Dee this much since... [the last time we were in a firefight on a strange planet](#) while Roslin and Adama futzed with leaving Lee behind, Starbuck was very super special and important, everybody was acting and making executive decisions like they were in a cult, and Gaius was stumbling through the imaginary religious artifacts of an old and alien culture. Hmm...

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Of course, Adama immediately shields the missiles once the other five Raptors go home, just like Three thought. "You see? Never over just one ship." Three takes off, all glib in the face, and the rest of them stare at each other. Apples taste delicious unless

you're the last one to take a bite. "That is not a good sign, my friends," says Cavil -- he likes machines to do their thing, and he wants to find Earth. Eight is all wow about how she defied the group -- right now, that is her stock in trade, no matter what iteration of the model she is. The girl made to love and be loved in return takes loyalty and duty really strongly, it's always been one of my favorite things about her. Love of country is a higher level of love, and demands just as much. (Not to mention the full-body shivers they all must get at this very concept, considering like three of them have gone rogue, ever. Alien thought systems: assume it hurts like cancer, like one cell in a body going crazy and not listening, not checking in. That's Athena, all the time; that's what Boomer's fighting to avoid, every robotic picosecond of every day. Try on those Cylon shoes, they're super comfy.) Leoben -- the resident "it's all about me" mystic of the Cylons, does not like Three getting her lunatic chocolate in his wild-eyed peanut butter: "It's not about in the Eye of Jupiter. It's about her." (I know I waxed crazy about this before, but remember when they just talked and it didn't matter which one was talking? I love knowing their personal agendas and weirdnesses and blind spots. In just a few months, Gaius Baltar has managed to fracture even that. Even their binary democracy is over, thanks to him: now you always know which is which. They call her "D'Anna," which would have horrified her back on Old Caprica; one day we'll know other Leobens, other Cavils, other Simons, and they won't always agree, and they'll be people, and I'll stop getting the toasterfucker hate-mail once and for all.) Case in point: "It's like we don't even know them anymore," says Caprica, of course, who has a Galactica kind of romantic trouble with this turn of events. (Somewhere, my Billy's like, "Girl, I hear you.") Cavil -- who makes the hard decisions and says the hard things and always goes to the logical, horrifying next step: "We may have to do something about this. We may have to do it sooner than later." [End of Line.](#)

Still in the teaser. I don't like this part very much, in terms of emotional response, and here's why. My whole "you can't rape a robot" stance is huge in the list of reasons why I personally feel sympathy toward the Cylons, and it rests on the concept that even if you know she's a robot, there's a part of you that doesn't. That's the part you have to protect, and that's what's at stake here. Agathon quarters, Sharon very much in Helo's terrified, sad

face. "Hera's alive. I'm her mother, and I'm going to get her." He's shaking, begging her to consider other options: "Listen to me, okay? We could take a Raptor, we can fly to the baseship ourselves. I don't care anymore." She shakes her head and won't look at him; he promises to find another way. She swears there isn't another way. Her need is terrible. "Don't ask me to do this, Sharon," turning away from her; she comes around on the other side. "Listen to me. You have always been the strong one. You believed in us when no one else would. I'm begging you to do this. Find the courage to do this for both of us, okay?" Only two Cylons we know ever did this DIY: Gina, and the Cavil on New Caprica. Gina didn't resurrect, thankfully, and when Cavil did, it hurt like hell. A race protects itself by making this count. It looks like it doesn't cost, to us: it does. Ask Helo. He takes her face in his hands, and she begins to cry. She throws her arms around him, voice strong and full of tears: "I love you." You can barely hear him whisper in return. He starts to moan, choking on it, and looks into her eyes as he pulls the trigger. Blood spatters on the wall behind her, and she goes down; he catches her as she falls, drops the gun, and begins to scream.

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Welcome the fuck back to Battlestar Galactica! Hope you had a great holiday, and your prescriptions have been filled!

41,401 souls in the Fleet. (That's one less than a second ago, by the way, for which I thank the powers that put that number in the credits. Ouch. Tiny little ouch.) Helo watches the Marines cleaning up the mess, zipping his wife into a bodybag, with Adama and Roslin standing by. Adama sends the Marines out and the three of them have a little talk, surrounded by his wife's blood. "Sharon's downloading into another body aboard a Cylon ship right now, isn't she?" asks Roslin. Helo's sitting down, hollowed out. "She begged me to do it." Helo not being strong is like seeing Roslin get dumped on. It's viscerally unsettling. She stares him down. "Gods, if you'd...seen the look in her eyes when I..." Adama -- who's not all that happy with Roslin right now either, by the way, which explains why Olmos spends this entire scene not looking a goddamn person in the eye -- points out that Sharon's got all kinds of clearance: "Codes, procedures; the tactical situation down on the planet's surface." Helo doesn't look up. It's like one of those readings where the people read a play without looking at

each other; three people in their cages, trying to talk to each other. "... The Cylons have access to all of that as well," he finishes. Helo gets angry, pointing out that Adama gave her the uniform because he knew she wouldn't betray them. Adama points out that she might not have a choice.

I don't know about that -- not because I love Sharon so much, but because until like five minutes ago, the Cylons never needed to interrogate each other. They just knew. I can't see having any systems in place to get through to somebody like that: even when DEMAND LOVE was getting weird about concentration camps and nuclear annihilation, the other Cylons mostly just acted like they were being bitchy. "She says she could resist, that she wouldn't let it happen. She'll get Hera...and she'll come back." Roslin makes her point a hell of a lot better here than she did last time she faced off with Helo, which is good because this time she has even less of the moral high ground than she did before, when he didn't know she'd kidnapped his baby to suck its blood: "That's quite a leap of faith you've made, there, Captain. And if it involved your family only, I'd say it was brave. But you've put the entire Fleet in jeopardy, are you aware of that?"

He's palpable enough just being there; it hurts enough to know he's in the room. He doesn't have to do anything; he does anyway. He stands with an angry, hateful grin, locking eyes and coming closer -- that's a lot of Helo to have coming at you -- and gives the only appropriate answer here: "If you hadn't lied...and stolen our baby in the first place," Adama, still not looking at anybody in the room, holds his arm but doesn't pull or push. "We wouldn't be here at all." It's the hand you put on a dog when he starts growling at the intruder: gentle but firm and allowing the growl to continue. I don't know how -- without saying or doing anything -- Olmos manages to make his point in this scene so gracefully, but it's really something. Without even moving both feet, he's managed to assure Helo that he loves him and is worried about him, Roslin that he agrees with her in theory but is still pissed about the baby, and both of them that they aren't getting away with anything as long as he's there. As long as I'm wiggling the body electric about how great this show is, I should say that he is fucking rad.

McDonnell is, of course, no slouch. The great thing about having such a good cast in terms of the actual craft is that they get sparking off each other and it goes wild right in your hand. One supernova is enough; this scene has three. (Don't even get me started on the Dee/Kara scene coming up. I almost barfed! I kicked your dog so hard he screamed!) So Laura looks down as Helo turns away; everybody's quiet as he sits down again. She speaks in measured tones, fully aware of at least this one bad call. "I certainly played my part in bringing us to this moment. And there's plenty of blame to throw around, and I accept it. And now all of our lives are in the hands of Sharon Agathon." Factually true, and something to worry about, because there's nothing any of them can do about that now. Everybody's back in their cages. "All we can do is hope that your wife is worthy of the unconditional trust you place in her, Captain." She turns, chastened but proud, and calls back over her shoulder: "And you as well, Admiral." Guess we'll see, lady. I remember wanting to open up my shirt and take her cancer for myself. I still love her, but I miss loving loving her. How can I love Kara Frackin' Thrace more than Laura Roslin? Something's not right. Fuck story logic, I said. And it fucked me right back, because nobody makes more sense than Laura Roslin, even/especially now. Damn her.

Sharon gasps and wakes in a birthing pod, as Caprica strokes her hair. She asks what happened, solicitously, and Sharon swallows. "They wouldn't let me see my daughter, so my husband shot me. It was the only way." She looks up into Caprica's eyes, the yearning: prodigal daughter, returning home. It's so different now, isn't it? This is the model that used to make the other Sixes spit with frustration; the only Eight we've seen Caprica love, Boomer, is receding into the background, dealing with Hera -- whom she also loves -- just as Caprica's grownup love life is falling apart. Who does Caprica have? The other Sixes blew her head off to make a rhetorical point; she cut off everybody else when she found Gaius again -- everybody but Boomer and Biers -- and now Boomer's crazy and jealous and Cally-hateful, and Biers and Gaius are gone. How lonely must she be? And here comes the one Cylon who gets it, who understands the spark. Who gets why you could miss New Caprica, awfulness aside, just being with them, and loving them as best you can, as God would want you to: Sharon loves them so much she switched sides altogether. We didn't really meet Caprica until landfall, but she's really got a



learning curve on her. (I saw it in Playboy, along with the rest of them -- it was kind of like seeing the Final Five Cylons. Aside: the only thing more powerful than the beauty of those shots is the respect she garners from me for standing for them. Beautiful shots, really. And I say that as a Puritan.) But seriously, I'm proud of Caprica: even now, she's doing what she thinks is right parallel to what she needs, watching Sharon for signs of impending treachery while wanting so badly to believe. And still being pretty scary at the same time, like Sixes have to.

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Caprica smiles down at Sharon sweetly: "Well, it's over now. The important thing is that you're here." Before she can start planning their spa weekend and whatever, girl's night on the Pimp Bed with snacks and hair-braiding and pirated copies of SINchronicity, for the cryin', Sharon asks after Hera. Caprica doesn't even think about whether to be honest: "She's getting worse." Sharon wants to see her, and Caprica's smile slowly fades: "And then what?" Then you teach me the lesson that anybody I trust will eventually turn on me? Again? If Eight was built to love and be loved in return, then Six was built just to be loved; Caprica is learning what happens when they don't. Like Boomer, like you and me. Over and over, Six learns, in the most horrible ways. Function isn't personality, it's neurosis; waking up is painful. And then what? Six is predicated upon a strong and clear purpose: whatever it is, DEMAND LOVE or DEMAND PEACE or God's will or Colonial rape farms or New Caprica, it's the Sixes that fight hardest for the plan. Take the plan away and she falls apart. And then what? It's the Sixes that play midwife, over and over again. And then what? Sharon closes her eyes and swallows the grossness: "What they did to me. Stealing my baby, and telling me she was dead. Proved it. Hera's safer here." Caprica smiles through her tears of relief. "And so am I," Sharon lies. And Caprica's smile is clear again. Oh, girl, take care of yourself. Sharon's the apple. Again.

Apollo tells the guerillas and the Marines and Sam the plan for protecting the Temple: Starbuck reported the Centurion party Three sent down in advance, coming toward the Temple and the basecamp down a canyon, making a chokepoint they can use for an ambush. "Our mission is to hold the Temple here. If we fail, we blow it up, we fall back to these rendezvous points, and then we

head into the mountains and we wait for rescue." Everybody nods. Sam notes it's as good a place to die as any. I see what Kara sees in him.

Dualla and Fischer discuss the totally exposed, scary clear area between them and Starbuck's Raptor. Fischer -- and I don't know if this is an intentional echo of Sam above or just a sloppy edit -- calls it "a nice day for a walk." They rise, and gunfire immediately rings out; Fischer drops and one arm is thrown across Dualla's ass. Without looking, she hisses, "Hey, take it easy, Fischer," then realizes he's gone. ... "Sarge? Sarge?" She rolls him over; his face is fried. Like he looked at the sun. She stands up, gunshots ringing out, and runs down the side of the canyon, under heavy fire, like a total motherfracking badass on a hike through the valley of death. I â™¥ Dualla.

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Chief bangs his forehead in the Temple of Five, trying to decipher the writing and figure out the secret of the Eye. Cally comes running up with the phone: "Galen, it's Major Adama!" If you were thinking that's like Cally's highest purpose in the universe, bringing you the phone, I won't say you're wrong, but I will say: Keep watching. Apollo asks Chief about the Eye, and Chief asks for more time. Apollo reports that the Cylons are on the move, and to hurry. Chief hangs up and everybody runs around inside the Temple some more.

On a bluff above the Temple, Three and Gaius stare down at it. Three gets shy, Gaius tries to encourage her. "The answers to all your questions are down there in that Temple. What's wrong?" She has nonspecific God fear, shivering. "You are the anointed one. Chosen by God to look on the faces of the Final Five Cylons. It's already written. You will succeed." She sighs and looks down, he cups her face; she reveals her heretofore secret fear that the Final Five and all the Face of God mess that is implied will make her crazy. "The hybrid has looked into the space between life and death, and she's seen things that we cannot conceive of. But she's been driven mad as a result." (Told you. But I also said it only looks crazy to us.) He tells her, in a strong voice, to have faith in God. "Put your life in His hands. He will guide you to your destiny." She smiles, encouraged and brave, and says quietly, "I'm grateful to you. For everything." Her voice implies so much

tenderness and intimacy -- they've told us about it but I don't feel like we've really seen it before. She loves him like whoa. He's all tied up with her religion stuff, but she's the one driving the boat. It's a really cool dynamic, as girl/boy religious weirdness goes. He could have just been the Charlie Manson, but instead he's the one that doesn't know what the hell he's doing. Of course, that also means she's right, and we can't have that, so Chip Six appears: "Her destiny will part company from yours, Gaius. She's not the chosen one, you are." Who's talking? "Yes," he says, "I know," and at Three's questioning look: "I know." Remember when I actually cared about the humans, and the Cylon asides were just little irritating terrorist-sympathy diatribes? I can't say at this point that I blame the humans for what has happened here, and I do actually really love the Kara/Lee/Sam/Dee storyline -- yeah, I'm the one -- but MAN do these girls get me going. I love them so much!

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In fact, let's have a little sidebar, you and me. It's time to talk mission statement. I can't speak for the creators or writers of the show, but here's my deal. Why the fuck should the point of any television show be that "they" hate us and "they" can't be stopped and "they" are evil and not worth a moment's time? I'm sure your objections to the Basestar storyline are totally valid, and not necessarily hateful, but I can't imagine anything more boring, or short-sighted, or reactionary. You're worried about the Cylons getting less scary? I could stand to live in a world where that was at least possible, where most of the decisions being made by my government arise from that kind of superstitious, hateful nonsense. No matter how twisted by hate or religion -- and we've got more than enough on our side of both to balance the scales -- there's no such thing as "they." There are birth pains for civilization, there are seemingly impossible thought patterns and mores that contradict ours, there are interdependencies and long-term rivalries and hatreds, but...the show's been pretty open about turning itself into a dual-protagonist show. Cylons and Fleet at cross-purposes. That's a lot closer to the truth of the world around us than some silly unstoppable enemy chasing you across space until you get cancelled. I don't dismiss the evil the Cylons have done, but I don't see the point in indicting them for it. You can be lazy and point to the jihad and say it's evil and inhuman and stop there, or you can wonder why.

War is a joke. Take a drop of water, or mercury, and divide it: they're both made of the same stuff, come from the same places, love and worship the same God, and if you put them together, you'll never figure out where one starts and another begins. It's molecular, something you can't see. 9/11 : the attack on the Colonies : Gaius's presence on the Basestar :: a mistake, that changes everything for everybody. That kills innocence and introduces the possibility of (here it comes) grace. Our difference from the Cylons is as simple as thought process -- and he's breaking it down as quickly as we're learning to think like them. Athena is the first step in creating that raindrop; Three's complete schizout is the same thing, from the Cylon side. Jihads are made of people and they have reasons for what they do. It's slack and ignorant to leave it at that; all that does is contribute to the joke of war. "They" are very, very different from you and I in certain respects, and not going about things in ways I approve, of course, but "they" are people. Trying to figure it out. It's a difficult but I think necessary proposition to at least try on their shoes once in a while. Anybody or anything that you think is out-and-out evil deserves at least a second glance (see Three at the conclusion of this episode for the Cylon response; check out how similar it is to blowing off the show for asking these questions).

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So no, I don't "mourn the loss" of the Cylons' mystery and menace: that's evolution. Heaven for everybody. I think any story that wants to responsibly talk about war and genocide had better get its shit together about this, and I think this show is clearly doing so. Frankly, jihad and terrorism could stand to lose a fuckload of mystery and menace, we could all stand to read up on the Quran, because that's how you move forward. Other people don't need your mystery and menace, they need your strength. How you draw the line between that and saying the show's jumped the shark, or I'm a bad American or a shitty writer for loving the Cylons, is your business. I'm trying really hard not to say that the concept is offensive to me, because it's really just a TV show we could stand to learn a little something from. But it sometimes seems to confuse a lot of people when I have to write about the Cylons, and I figure now's as good a time as any, because this is a Cylon-heavy episode and a Cylon-heavy show and we live in a Cylon-heavy world, and I, for good or ill, am your recapper.

Apollo's on a ridge with the snipers while Anders's team sets up the charges in the canyon. The conversation cuts back and forth between the two teams; Barolay asks Anders what happens if the Cylons don't play along, and Anders tells her they're following Apollo's orders in the hopes they won't die. Somebody asks Lee if the civilians can handle, this and Apollo points out that for a Pyramid team they did pretty well on Caprica. The Centurions appear and Lee signals the ground team. The Centurions continue recon and we wait, and wait, and wait for them to show up.

Commercial, more waiting, and then a big huge fight. They take out the lead Centurion's legs and he fires from the ground, awesomely. One of our guys falls, and the robots finally pull back. The groups reconvene, hiding the body and checking all points. "We bought ourselves a little time," Lee says. "But they'll be back. And with force. So dig in. We'll need to hold them off until Chief finds the Eye. And keep your eyes out on those ridges." More staring, more pointing guns, more worrying. Anders asks about Kara and Dee; nothing so far.

In Starbuck's Raptor, she tries to pull the gloves off her burned hands, but it hurts too much. She squeezes her eyes tight against the sound of ripping flesh, biting holes in her lip and gasping. She doesn't cry. Missing the shadow passing by, she goes for the morph, almost crying or barfing, unable to open it. There's a thump, and she pulls her pistol at the door. It took a shorter time to write those sentences than it did to watch it happen, but it felt like it was taking forever. It's hard to watch. Dualla sticks her head in and Starbuck lowers the gun, shouting how she almost shot her, and Dee's like, "Yeah. Glad to see you too." She drops that tune mighty fast as Starbuck gags on her pain, having ripped more skin holding the gun. She takes Kara's hands softly: "Okay, okay. It's okay, yeah." She grabs a morph shot and stabs Kara in the leg with it, hard, for old time's sake. Kara cuts eyes at her and she shrugs; Kara knows she deserved that at least: "Lee sent you?" Dee bites off every other word: "Yep. My husband...ordered me to risk my life for yours, that's what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna bring Starbuck back to Apollo." Starbuck rolls her eyes in pain and guilt -- and smack! -- and orders another chardonnay, hold the black flies.

Caprica brings Sharon to the nursery, where Hera is screaming. Boomer stands at her crib, uncomfortable, immediately scowling at them, sick of listening to the kid cry, sick of feeling like the copy. Sharon crouches and looks at Hera, smiling through tears, as Caprica watches lovingly. "It's me. It's Mommy. Yes." She looks up at Boomer: "What's wrong?" She shakes her head, angry and out of her mind and hurt. "We tried everything. She didn't respond." Caprica -- never one to shelter Eight from the harsh realities of life -- is on fire with joy as Hera quiets down: "Look at that! Hera knows her. That's amazing." She stupidly reaches out to clasp Boomer's arm, thinking this is joyful for her as well. Six's smile was never as beautiful as the day she learned about Hera; Chip Six's smile was never so beautiful as when she was spinning her Crazy Math. "You and she are biologically identical, [but] Hera recognizes her mother!" Like it's a science fair project, and not Boomer's life, Boomer's failure, in 3-D living Technicolor. Boomer's lip curls, spitting again on Sharon Valerii, one last time: "Well, good, because you can have her. I'm done with her." Sharon, full of love for her sister, confused by this new side of her: "You don't mean that. I know you still care about Tyrol and Adama." Boomer shakes her head, almost shivering with rage: "No. I'm done with that part of my life." She means it as much as she's ever meant anything, as much as anybody's ever meant anything is how much she means this. Doesn't make it true. Caprica sees this, and more, and her grin falls. "I learned that on New Caprica. Humans and Cylons were not meant to be together," Boomer says, breaking Caprica's heart. "We should just go our separate ways."

For those of you keeping score at home: This is now the second time Cally's killed Boomer. This time I think it'll keep. I almost hope it does. I wanted to reach through the screen and save her; hold her, find her in there and rescue her, and say I was sorry. I was sad when Ellen died; this is worse. This is hate, returned upon hate. There's no love here. This leads nowhere.

Sharon puts the baby down in her crib, smooths her layette, notices her belly's gone hard. "Have you noticed that before?" Boomer's stricken: the thing she was supposed to do, the thing that made her okay: turned on her, she fucked it up. Thought like a robot, even in the places she felt human. You just got Cavil'd. Caprica gets worried and asks what it could mean; Sharon says "blocked intestine" like she's from Vancouver, rhyming it with



"end of line." Boomer folds her arms, petulant: "Our doctors examined her." Sharon points out they've never even seen a child, and pulls Caprica away for a private talk. "Hera needs to be seen by a human doctor. I need to take her back to Galactica." Caprica shakes her head, sympathetic: "You know that can't happen, what this child means to us. What she means to every living Cylon." As Sharon puts her hand on Caprica's arm to beg, Boomer interrupts hatefully. "I should have known. She's been planning this all alone." Sharon tells her to feel Hera, and Boomer -- her skin crawling at the unending screaming, if you've had a kid you know this feeling, how much it makes you hate yourself, what a failure it makes you -- and nods. "She's right. Belly's as hard as a gourd." Sharon pushes Caprica's buttons -- always a sore point, but especially today -- talking about how God will never forgive her if she lets the first of the new generation die. Caprica's the only one who loves Hera as much as these two, the only one capable. She softens; Boomer gets harder.

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"Maybe Cavil's right. Maybe God never wanted us to have children in the first place." Sharon turns; Boomer's lost, her hand at Hera's throat. She's still screaming. Boomer grits it out through her teeth, biting down on whatever's past irritation, biting down on self-hate. "Maybe it'd be better for you if I just snapped your little neck!" Sharon runs forward and Boomer whips around to look up at her, rabid. "Don't! Please. Please don't kill my baby girl," Sharon begs. Boomer doesn't move. You're Sharon Agathon: they took your child, had it stolen from them. You forced your husband to murder you, went behind enemy lines, to get her back. And now the broken mirror, the punishment Galactica gave this sister, is staring you in the face: they keep killing Boomer. They took everything and left you with nothing but a hole of guilt and loneliness, and no matter how many lies you tell or how bad it gets, you know you're not the real thing. Even Hera knows, even Hera chose Athena ("Athena") over Boomer. Even the life you claim to hate bites at your hands. Nature Girl never had a chance: they threw her onstage with no background, no knowledge, no chance of doing anything but what she was told. And along comes Nurture Girl, the one who willingly chose to live as a human, the one that gets the love and accolades. The one that trained herself to love beyond the lines of country and race and creed; the one with no hidden programming, no secrets, no

lies. The one that got the guy and got the baby and got her commission as a Cylon, not some sick robot approximation of a human that never deserved to be loved. The one that was created to die. They stare; Caprica comes back around Boomer, and snaps her neck. You can see it in her face, for a second: the shark. She plays midwife. "I believe the future of the Cylon rests with this child," Caprica says as Sharon picks up her daughter. "And the others who are going to come after her." Sharon nods: "So do I." It's another blood ceremony, another agreement of shared purpose. This is how DEMAND LOVE started; this is really just another iteration. Until they get it right. "There's a captured Raptor aboard. Let's go. We've gotta get you back to Galactica." The three of them leave: maiden and mother and midwife. Boomer's body lies on the floor, forgotten. Like she never existed. I cried, right there.

You're Sharon Valerii: Lieutenant Junior Grade Sharon "Boomer" Valerii, pilot T-990429, from Aerolon Colony. You're Brokeback Boomer. They sit you down in a room and tell you you're nothing, not what you thought: the most disgusting thing you can imagine, the enemy of humanity, everything you have learned to hate and fear beyond thought. You shoot the man you're trained to respect most, the one whose approval everybody desperately needs, because you're a tool: you fuck that up. Your relationships, your lover, your Commander, everybody turns on you in a second, for stuff you have no control over. They chain you up, denigrate you, shoot at your face in their dreams; they murder you. And even then, your first thought is love: bringing Cylon and human back into balance. You fuck that up. You come into possession of a daughter, another child from another life, whom you're told contains the future, and your most treasured faith: the child born to bring Cylon and human back into balance. Her existence is your salvation: human and Cylon in one, no infighting and no self-hatred and no fear, no loneliness, no pain. And you fuck that one up too, and even the baby can tell. Don't think we didn't all have a hand in bringing her here; don't think she could have ended anywhere else. Everybody has a destiny. She was always headed straight for this, and we did it to her. Cylons and humans, together. I always knew I'd eventually have to find another favorite character, but that doesn't mean it doesn't suck right now.

On the algae planet there are more gunshots, and in the Temple, Cally comes running up with the phone: "It's the Major." She should just do this seven times in every episode, I'd be so happy, Clyne gets paid, everything works out. Apollo yells again about the Eye of Jupiter and whatever, the whole scene happens again from a second ago, and the sun is going to go nova, and the Centurions are coming. Outside, there's an awesome part where Apollo pulls a pin and tosses Anders a live grenade, which he smoothly basketballs right into the group of Centurions. I'm sure there's a word for that move, I just call it "gorgeous." Apollo orders the Chief to blow the Temple, and Chief's pissed but he gets ready to leave. As he's playing out the detonator lead toward the door, he turns back and wishes he had more time, or some other way, or the answer. Cally, of course, has no idea about any of this and just tries to comfort him as well as a person like her can. I don't expect any better from her at this point, I just wish they'd fucking stop blowing up CHURCH.

Dualla reports that the Raptor's structurally intact, and Starbuck nods. "Okay." She tells Dualla what needs to happen, which is that you take data cord from the comms and bypass the fly-by... what am I telling you for? You know how to fly a Raptor. She finishes up the instructions and convulses in pain again. Still refusing to cry. Man, when Kara Thrace actually cries, I am going to fucking lose my mind. That's worse than Helo. Dee gives her another shot and notes there's only one left: "Better save it for when you fly us out of here." Kara laughs and doesn't point out that her hands are hamburger. "I can't fly. Especially all whacked up on morph." She starts to drift off on the smack and Dualla's like, "Frackin' great." From the depths of her drug haze, Starbuck heads into Bad Idea territory. "He won't cheat. He's too honorable." Dualla continues to strip data cord like it slapped her momma, and snorts: "Unlike you." Starbuck's eyes are lidded, tired and sad. "Yeah, unlike me. I love Sam, I hate Sam. I love Lee, I hate Lee. Gods, I have to cheat just to keep the pieces all nice and neat." (P.S. Those lines are actually impossible to say credibly, but Sackhoff does fairly well. That should have been an ad-lib, because there are a million ways to get that across that don't sound like they were first written down on a piece of paper by a science fiction writer, and Sackhoff could act the hell out of any of them.) Starbuck drifts off at the end of this improbable line of dialogue, and Dualla slaps the everloving bastard shit out of

her. It's AWESOME. "Stay with it," she says calmly. "You still gotta walk me through these avionics." That's amazing. They managed to do that scene the one possible way where everybody rocks and nobody looks like an asshole. Or I mean, more of an asshole than Kara just naturally is. That was great.

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As Chief notifies Apollo that he's wiring the last detonator, down the bluff, Three and Gaius enter the Temple of Five... with a sudden Cavil. Why? He's wearing a very nice hat, but why? And also: you couldn't have had him on the outer edge of the earlier scene, so we'd at least know he was there? Three sees the explosives; Cavil yells that they have to disconnect the charges like immediately. (Would it get on your very last nerve if I pointed out that Cally and Chief put bombs in the Temple-as-political-keystone, and Three and Cavil are the ones to take them out again, because it's a sacred place? Yes? Never mind, then.)

Although Chief does balk, outside with Apollo screaming in his ear to blow it. He stalls and can't do it. Chief's relationship with religion is the most fascinating thing. What he can and can't do. I feel like if he sat down with Kara they would have the whole subject figured out in like five seconds. Three orders Gaius to come help with the de-explosiving of the Temple; outside, Apollo grabs the detonator control. For some reason it's less offensive that Lee would do this: it's in his character completely, and I like him a whole lot, and he's not really betraying anything by doing it. What does he care? Three pulls the last charge as Apollo spins up the detonator and presses the button: nothing. He starts to throttle the Chief, which is comedic to watch, but just then God shows up.

"Major, look," says Tyrol, pointing over the ridge at the strange lights in the sky. It looks like the sun going nova. Also, it is.

Chip Six appears, pointing at the huge EYE ON THE FLOOR that you might remember spotting when it took up permanent residence onscreen last episode. "There it is, Gaius. It has the answers to all of your questions." He stares: "That's the Eye?" Three asks what he means, and he covers: "Something the hybrid said, uh...sapphire blue, shining like unto a star... " Nicely done, Doctor. Smooth. Cavil puts his chin up, standing between them.

"D'Anna... you didn't come here looking for Earth. You came here looking for something else."

The sun explodes.

Kelly and Gaeta run around on CIC about how the sun is exploding and the nova is going to take out the whole planet in an hour. Tigh and Roslin stare, Adama is grim.

"Major, look. It's the mandala from the Temple. This is supposed to be happening. That's it. I was staring at it the whole time. The sun is going nova. The nova is the Eye of Jupiter." That was all one chunk of dialogue courtesy of my man the Chief. Anders stares up at the Eye and thinks about how his girlfriend has a destiny, and how if the world were ending right now, which it technically is, who would you want by your side, and how funny it is that suddenly, it's okay that that person is Lee Adama. Chief stares up at the Eye and thinks about his parents, how they died in the holocaust, and about suicide and what happened after Boomer, and about the question of faith: how can you profess faith when the natural world supplies you with physical proof of miracles? Apollo stares up at the Eye and realizes he still gets to blow up a church.

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Dualla flies Starbuck's Raptor shittily, as Kara's explaining that they'll just go directly into orbit and then Galactica can come and save them. Which is -- not solely for reasons of time management -- way better than Dualla showing up with Kara in her arms, like the martyr of all time, which was the concretized metaphor originally in the draft here, I think, which gives me the wiggins. Now of course, if that had happened, I would have wept and cheered, but -- what are you really saying there, beyond "awesome visual that indicts and glorifies at once," that you didn't already say before? This whole storyline in this episode -- maybe this whole episode, full stop -- comes down to one moment: that split second that Dualla, the voice of home, saw Kara's wounded hands, and dropped her rage entirely. Just forgot to be angry, or do anything but love. That's my girl. In that moment, she's better than the four of them ever were, together or separately. That's Adama taking Sharon's oath of service, with one hand to the Gods; and Caprica getting in a Raptor with

Athena, playing midwife again, headed for the scariest place in the universe; and Chief standing under an angry sun, refusing to blow up the Temple as a world comes apart around him. That's Helo, weeping as she falls, with her name on his lips. Because he knows it's the only way, and that she can't help but come home again. That's what humanity's capable of at its highest moments: faith and mercy, beyond anger or fear. That's what strength looks like, and it's how we're going to win.

I'm allowed to be excited that my favorite show is back on TV, right? Give me that. Three stares down at the Eye, about which Chip Six just gaiused her loud and clear. "This is my destiny. To see what lies between life and death." It is. It is. Cavil shakes his head: "And to look upon the faces of the Final Five. That can't happen." He's the guy that killed Socrates and Galileo and Copernicus and Jesus Christ, for saying things you shouldn't say. He's the one that says there are things we shouldn't know. He is the face of evil, on this show. Gaius is weakness and Three is hubris; you want evil? Brother Cavil. "This is my destiny," she protests, caught up in rapture; he apologizes to her, calling her by name, and takes aim. Gaius takes him out from behind, and he falls. As she turns to the Eye, the ceiling and pillar begin to glow, connecting heaven and earth. She steps into the ray of light upon the floor, and finds herself in the Great Hall. She stares around in wonder, turning on her heel like a girl. End of Line. She smiles at the Final Five, bathed in light. "Is it really you?" she asks. Everywhere there are spirits, whispering voices, the sound of all knowledge, the sound the hybrid hears and understands. The light the hybrid sees. She steps toward one, who holds out his/her hand. Three's face is beautiful, lit with wonder, and love. Her eyes go soft, and tender, as she gets the joke. "You. Forgive me... "

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Whom does she see? "I had no idea," she says, eyes filling with infinite grief, and infinite love, and understanding, and the peace just past understanding, and on into grace. Who does she see? The one in light too bright to see holds her hand briefly; she clasps it gratefully, surprised by mercy and by beauty. Who does she see? Kara Thrace, broken on her mother's wheel, just like all the times Three dicked with Caprica and Boomer, in their own best interests. William Adama, the steward of life, just as she is.



Felix Gaeta, whose heart was broken by love, just like hers. Laura Roslin, who laid down her life and everything she held dear, in the search for God. Just like her. Sam Anders, who carved out a life in a haze of fear and radiation, hoping for better. Anastasia Dualla, who calls us home when we're too far out. Lee Adama, for whom breaking the sacred covenants of duty and love is physically painful, but so often necessary. Caprica Six, who taught her to love so completely that you lose whatever guideposts you were taught. Gaius Baltar, who taught her to question, and learn, and look, and seek. Sharon Valerii, who has been used just as cruelly as God is using her now. Sharon Agathon, who taught her everything that rises -- every single thing -- is a sacrament to God, no matter how terrifying it may seem at the time. Maybe she sees Ellen Tigh, or Billy Keikeya, or Maya, or Hera. Maybe she sees Leoben or the hybrid, eyes finally clear of madness, able to speak plain in this new dimension, free of the constraints of time and what we see. If I wrote it, I know exactly who she'd be looking at: D'Anna Biers Three, Cylon and angel, fearless traveler, steward of life, brave dreamer, seeker, lover, all of these and more. And the last thing she'd hear that fucker say would be, "I love you. We've always loved you. You can come home now." Whatever face it wears, and you can't honestly think it matters, maybe that's what she's hearing now. Cylon psychology is based on projection. Mine too. Yours too.

Three stands in the Temple of Five, and in Heaven, and between five stars, burning off what doesn't work. Gaius catches her as she falls, asking what she saw. "What... Who was it?" Her eyes go white and she begins to choke. Every rapture has its price: ask Dualla, looking at her pilot's hands. Ask Chief, watching the sun itself burn away his awful burden. "So beautiful," she says. Now it's all she can see. He begs her to tell him what she saw, still hoping against hope he's a Cylon, and not just a hateful traitor to his people and the Gods. "You were right," she smiles. She was the anointed one. It was time. You can't go through this and come back: the point of reincarnation is where she just reached. If they don't box her for this, something else will happen. She's done. She touched God and held His hand, and went blind, and is dying. "D'Anna, did you see my face? I have to know, please. Please, stay with me." She drops in his arms, her head hits the floor with a sickening thud. God rest her soul. (I love these Cylons, I really do. Here's a list of some of my favorite TV people

-- as in, "I really identify with what that character is going through" -- of all time, which you will definitely find horrifying, but might find edifying as far as the process story this recap is turning out to be. [Marissa Cooper](#), [Brenda Chenowith](#), [Dr. Izzie Stevens](#), [Amanda and Hilda](#), [Aeryn Sun](#), [Karen Sammler](#), [Toby Ziegler](#), and [Simon Cowell](#). The reason should be obvious: I don't have any idea how to be human, either. I'm just happy when other people try.)

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"Stay, I have to know! Tell me, I have to know! Did you see my face?" She's gone. "Frack it," he mumbles to himself, hilariously. Like anybody else's religious awakening ever matters to anybody, right, but of course Gaius is like ten times less interested than anybody else would be. Besides Cavil, I mean. He knows full well what the cost will be, I'll give him that. He felt her die, in his arms. I think he loved her. I think he was along for the ride, and looking for salvation through her path, rather than his own. But he does know what he's trading here, I'll give him that, as he steps into the circle. At worst, he's human and dies: that's better than being human and living with what he spends every second ignoring. At best, he's a Cylon -- well, it's Gaius, so make that King Pimp of the Cylon Hordes, or maybe God Himself -- and nothing he's done matters, because he was doing what was right. Take away his purpose and he falls apart. "God, tell me the truth before I die?" He's ready. I'm kind of proud of him, even though he's coming to this with very impure intentions: as selfish as it is, as monumentally selfish as this is, he's still willing to trade. The Chief puts a gun to his head, and cocks it. "Welcome home, Mr. President." He knocks Gaius on the head, and the doctor goes down.

On Galactica CIC they're expositing: the Cylons have jumped away, the nova shock is coming fast, they're rescuing everybody off the surface before the nova hits.

The blast reaches the planet, and it smells like they burned the seaweed at Musashino, hitting all over the surface, beautifully taking first the bluffs and then the Temple apart, Raptors taking off, the ceiling falling in, the cliffs going down; the star's last fire chasing Raptors into Galactica's bay before she jumps. On other shows you can talk about the crucible and the this and that; on

this show? Actual stars, actual suns, actual nebulae. So awesome.

Cally and Chief climb out of a Raptor on the hangar deck, with Apollo and Anders, carrying a bodybag. They gurney the bag over to Tigh, and Chief opens it as Cally looks on. It's Gaius, sleeping like a filthy little angel. "He's not dead?" asks Tigh, in his saltiest voice. "No, unfortunately," grumbles the Chief. They're so cute. I'm glad everybody's back home. Tigh sends them to the bridge; Lee daps Sam on the knee sweetly, without looking, and their bodies come to an agreement. Sam's learned a little something about military time, and Lee's learned about why Kara loves him, and proven that his greatest goal -- and this is the best thing about him, always -- is that all four of them get out of this alive. I love Lee Adama.

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Kara comes out of Dualla's Raptor and down onto the wing. Sam launches toward her; Apollo stands on the wing, watching. Dualla approaches him, staring him down. He runs to her, one eye on Sam and Kara embracing. Four pairs of eyes close in relief and complicated love, and open again. Lee and Kara look at each other, in Sam and Dee's arms. The math here isn't so bad: this episode was about Kara and Dee's peace, and Lee and Sam's peace. We've nearly solved the problem. By TV/show rules, all we need is A) one episode where Dee and Sam get drunk and talk about what fuckholes their spouses are, and then B) maybe Kara and Lee beat each other up one more time, and then C) it'll be okay. Stop bitching. If you can't hate the Cylons anymore, and I can't have my Boomer anymore, and Laura Roslin doesn't seem interested in getting me back on her side, then I'm sorry, but: the weird sex tension between Kara and Lee is like the only original theme left on this whole show. You can still hate the Cylons if you want, it's not actually a huge deal for me, I'm just saying this is where I stop being polite and start getting real. Not that I was all that sensitive about protecting the feelings of Cylon haters before, I grant you, but at this point I just feel like it's blatantly resisting the point, and I can't cater. Like the show or don't, but don't complain that it's not what you signed up for. You signed up for a story, and you're getting a story. An awesome one. Don't freak out like a shipper just because it's not the story you were expecting.

Door number three! Another Raptor cracks open: Sharon, holding Hera. Helo laughs, heartbreakingly, and holds his daughter. For the first time in his life. With his wife by his side. They smile tenderly at each other, and she gets hardcore; he already knows the score. "We have to get her to Doc Cottle right away," she says, and with that, he's ready to go, to the sound of a hundred guns drawn, and sharp Marine barks: it's Caprica, standing on the wing, terrified, knowing she did this to herself for the glory of the Cylon, willing to take her lumps. Again. Sharon throws herself in front of Caprica, shouting. "Hold your fire! Hold your fire. She helped us escape." Tigh is very mean and angry, both of them understandable, as he tells Sharon -- addressing her as "Lieutenant," and I know there's nothing else for him to call her, but it still warms my heart -- to get the frack out of the way. Helo holds out hand, calling her name, and she runs off with him to take care of Hera. Which was part of the deal, and Caprica knows that. She knows all of it. She is a hero. She comes down into enemy custody, the Marines close rank around her; Tigh conducts them to You Know Where. This is going to be the best season ever, for the like sixth demi-season running, even if I don't get my weekly Basestar hit. Give me Chip Gaius and I'll roll over, I swear.

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On CIC, the Exposition Club of the week, Bill and Laura and Gaeta and Chief, talk about how the nova looks like the mandala inside the Temple. In other words: the sun looks like an eye. Stop the presses. They're both round and do important things like photosynthesis or looking at stuff. Roslin asks Chief if the Thirteenth Tribe maybe had a vision of what was to come, because lord knows the lady likes visions if they make her feel less crazy, and Chief applies some quick plot caulk: "I don't know what else it could mean." (This definitely falls under the "it makes sense, doesn't it?" rule of lazy writing, by the way.) It could mean any fucking number of things, but whatever, we know where this is headed so go with it: either there was another star at some point -- "Seen one nova, you've seen them all," deadpans Tigh -- or there was... oh, hi Gaeta. "Well, there was another nova." He spreads out a handy map on the console. This is retarded but whatever, this episode was fucking fantastic, they can pants around with novae for awhile. I'm sure this was just to sooth the hyperliteral sci-fi people in the audience, not that there's

anything wrong with that, but you know I don't roll like that, so it seems unbelievably silly at this point. I kept wanting to tap them on the shoulder and be like, "Fucking GOD. Blew up the SUN. She saw GOD. He blew out her EYEBALLS. Mysterious WAYS, dude. Just let it GO." But you're not me, so here's the official word: Another nova. "Seen 4,000 years ago, around about when the Temple might have been built. It's 13,000 light years from our present position. It's a cloud of gas known as the Ionian Nebula." They stare and think about how fucking coincidental everything is all the time and how even like space dust and little forest creatures are like, "Psst, Earth is totally two blocks over that way, next to the 7-11." Adama fills that in and meanwhile, in more interesting stuff that wasn't obvious last episode, Helo's wiggling out about the diagram of the Eye, which he didn't see at any point because he was too busy shooting his wife and crying about it. Always pointing fingers, that Helo, like some kind of postapocalyptic Pelosi.

Starbuck's lying on bunk with the giant mittens of TV burn victims and Helo -- have I mentioned today how awesome these two are together? Not just the way the characters are written, which is brilliant, but also the way they're so members of the same unit all the time, best friends, like when she had a gun to Helo's then-girlfriend's head and he was like, "Whoa, harsh!" and she just completely freaked out and he was like, "Dude, bro." I don't understand how they don't get more scenes together, with this awesome chemistry and totally bizarre thematic disconnect. If you think about the storylines, they are practically on different shows. Guess that explains it. However... "So Starbuck, tell me, is that what you gotta do to get a little extra rack time around here?" She cocks an eyebrow and asks if he's just there to mess with her. He kind of stutters around asking if she's got any octagonal pictures of her apartment on Caprica, a.k.a. the awesomest set on this whole show not taking place in Imaginary Crazyland. Although both sets share the same music, I guess, since God and Kara's dad are both Philip Glass. (Spoiler! Heh.) She flounces her burn victim/Mickey Mouse hands around and smiles, pointing toward a cigar box (of course) on the top shelf in her locker. "Hope you and Sharon aren't planning on redecorating, 'cause you're not gonna get any bright ideas from my old place." (We haven't seen the angle on this yet, have we, when Kara was being a normal human being, but I'm not

surprised she calls her "Sharon." First to hate, first to forgive. I love Kara Thrace.) He laughs, comparing her apartment to a particularly untidy -- yet awesome -- train wreck. He brings up her old paintings, and she scoffs: "What about 'em?" He goes very still.

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Props to the eagle-eyed posters who noticed this, because I honestly thought you were blowing smoke, and I'm right now very impressed. Not as impressed as Helo, who holds out two octagonal pictures: one, a grainy Chief shot of the Eye, and the other a painting from her apartment, last seen precisely 4,000 years ago before anything happened, seems like. "This? Was on the Temple. Where'd you get the idea to paint yours?" A new, scary, demonic, terrifying, velvet-rich, minor-key, mysterious and sad and scary exciting song begins. One we've never heard before. One which makes me very effing nervous, because it's introduced so forcefully it's a bet that we'll be hearing it all through 3.5, which makes me scared because of what happens next. She blows it off: "I don't know. It was just something I've been doodling since I was a kid, I liked the pattern." She looks away. "They built the Temple 4,000 years ago," he says, staring hard, and she gets so fucking weird you wouldn't believe it. Even the song is like, "Yikes, dude." He asks what's wrong, and Kara can barely say his name, choking on it. Brokeback. "Just something... Leoben... said once." Disgusted, and afraid, and somewhere there's something unlocking: "That I had a destiny, that it had already been written."

Kara fought every rule Adama brought down, because she knew she could get away with it. She fought [Garner](#) outright. The only person she's ever obeyed unthinkingly is Roslin, and the only person she's ever respected is [Cain](#). (Think about mommies, think about daddies.) The second thing Leoben ever told her was that she was afraid to be a mother; she resisted, he broke her. The third thing Leoben ever told her was that she would love him; she resisted, case pending. But the first thing Leoben ever told her was [this](#). She fought Adama and she fought Garner. If this were Lee, telling her this, she could blow it off. But Karl's her best friend, now that Kat's gone: he's just Lee without all the power games and sex stuff, leaving only love and respect and friendship. He's the only one that could get to her with this, so it



had to be him. This is God talking now: and if God's male, she's screwed. It's horrifying, to have that come back around on her now. When she's burned off so much of what didn't work already; when they've taken away her hands. The only thing scarier than this, on the big board, would be if you got all Hera's parents in a room (Laura and Bill, Sharon and Karl, Gaius and Caprica, Chip Six and Chip Gaius), flipping out simultaneously. That's literally the only thing that could shake the show this bad, and it's Helo saying this. I got really cold the second he pulled out the photograph; the music did the rest.

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Three wakes gasping in a resurrection pod, on fire with the rapture. Brother Cavil holds her hand tenderly, talking her through it. "You know the drill. Long, deep, controlled breathing." She looks at him, gripping his hand, smiling madly, full of love and things you can't say without sounding like the hybrid, or a [Doctor Who](#) recap. "At least you'll never have to go through this again," he says sweetly, and she smiles up at him. "The decision wasn't easy, but the conclusion was inevitable. Your model is fundamentally flawed." Her smile almost falters, but is buoyed by love, and a terrible wonder. "No," she says, looking up. "It's not a flaw to question your purpose. Is it? To wonder who programmed us, the way we think and why?" It's the purpose of existence, of course, but that's not how Brother Cavil rolls. "Well, that's the problem right there," he says, still holding her hand. "The messianic conviction that you're on a special mission to enlighten us. Look at the damage it's caused." She looks at him with infinite love. "I would do it all again." He nods. "We know. That's why we've decided to box your entire line." She's horrified; she's the martyred seeker. "Your consciousness, memory, every thought your model ever had, are going into cold storage," he exposit. "Indefinitely." She smiles at him, still in rapture. "One must die to know the truth. There are five other Cylons, Brother. I saw them." He looks down at her in pity; she looks up in wonder and love. They're both right. "One day, you're gonna see them too," she whispers. "One day." He says goodbye, lets go her hand as she calls him brother, presses a button on a small metallic device, pulls her USB. "Brother," she says, and goes dark. Dies forever. He pockets the device, still wearing his wonderful hat, stands up from the chair at her side, and walks away, shoulders slumped.

All across the gallery, a hundred, a thousand Cavils stand up and walk away from a thousand pods, as we pull back, away from the light and into the darkness. They look so much alike.

# STATES OF UNION

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 13 | Aired on 01.27.2007

*Taking A Break From All Your Worries* - Everybody lies and everybody betrays everybody else but nothing really terrible happens. The trial of Gaius Baltar begins. Lee and Dee and Kara and Sam continue to do their thing, but now even the show's convinced it's a matter of global importance.

**Recaplet:** Baltar's attempt at prison suicide is thwarted by Gaeta, who was out on a booty call, or so we're left to assume until the 50-minute mark. Apollo has either built or, I don't know, discovered a bar on Galactica, so he and Tyrol can get ripped and commiserate about how they secretly hate their wives.

Roslin actually interrogates Baltar herself, as if that wasn't the coolest scenario possible, and she gets all fired up for the airlocking of a lifetime, but Gaius won't give up any Cylon intel, so it's on to Plan B. Plan B is Adama's bright idea to use CIA-grade experimental LSD on a man who talks to the imaginary blonde robot in his head. Not that Adama knows that much, but he has spoken with Baltar on more than one occasion, right? So he and Roslin and Cottle administer the drug, which gets Baltar to spill the contents of his screwed-up psyche, and even on psychedelic truth serum, he still denies true responsibility. He does spill somewhat about ChipSix and the final five Cylons -- of whom he no longer seems to believe he's a member. So next, they haul out Gaeta for Plan C: appeal to his academic egotism. Gaius manages to see through that ruse, however, and decides to frack with Gaeta about "Who's the real traitor?" Gaeta flips and stabs Gaius right in the neck! And then Adama punches Gaeta right in the face! No one dies, though, and in the end, Gaius tells ChipSix he's "the chosen one," and Roslin tells Adama to prepare for The Trial of Gaius Baltar.

Elsewhere, both Kara and Lee get permission from their shat-upon spouses to be with each other, but Kara's willingness to divorce Sam scares the hell out of Lee, and they eventually wind up running back to their big, empty marriages.

**Bonus Scene:** Roslin interrogates Caprica Six! And it wasn't part of the episode so we could watch Lee and Tyrol bitch about their women! So not cool!

**Recap:** Previously, Starbuck and Apollo whined in a hell of their own devising, and Gaius signed execution orders while in his. I say it's your life, do what you want. Later, Chip Six told Gaius he might be a Final Fiver, and the Hybrid told him and Three that the chosen one would see the Final Five, and even though Three did and he didn't, Chip Six persisted in telling him that he was the chosen one. Three croaked, and then croaked for real, but before Gaius could do the same, Chief cold-cocked him. Elsewhere in time and space, though relative to all this we cannot say, the concept of enjambment was invented simultaneously with poetry. It would seem to have fallen out of favor in the thousands of years since then, considering how challenging this episode seems to be.

Now, God forbid I get up on my high horse or give you a tutorial in anything, but this show is ambitious on a bad day, and this episode is ambitious in an outsize way relative even to the usual, and it bums me out to think that a pretty simple poetic device, even used so obnoxiously/aggressively, could totally wreck the episode for you. I can see why, and I agree it's not a 100% success, but I pretty much love this episode and I'd like to share with you why. Hopefully using as few words as possible. Enjambment is from the French for "straddle," and it's when you end a line of verse before its time: think of Williams, or that awful dude with the punctuation jones. It's the second-most abused poetic grievance in crappy poetry, right after rhyme schemes, but done correctly (rather than arbitrarily), it's haiku brilliant. The point is to give you a second to run through every possible meaning that unended line could have, to let out the shapeless Hybrid nonsense your brain goes through, before the poet is forced to clamp down on the meaning in order to continue on the other side of the gap. A comparable example would be the visual of Three in the Temple last week, looking up at the Final Fiver: [this paragraph](#) is that kind of spiraling crazy talk that enjambment wants you to do, quietly and to yourself. It leaves a space of the unknown, a gap where the poem leaks out, and that's you doing the work of creating the poem's total meaning for a second, which makes you love the poem even as the next line adjusts your vector, because it's part of you now. Which is how this episode operates, from beginning to end: every line, every scene, every word's a cliffhanger. Everything has a gap in

it, and you're invited to point all the fingers you've got.

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Meaning it's not technically Olmos's fault -- he's a good director -- or the editor's fault -- also great -- but the fault of the screenwriter, Michael Taylor. Last seen employing the exact same technique in "[Unfinished Business](#)," which of course was awesome in the exact same way, or horrible in the exact same way, depending on where you're standing. The other one that managed to convince people it was "all about the quadrangle" when the quadrangle was just the lens it was looking through. Or focusing the light with, to light everybody on fire once and for all, maybe. I think I'm pretty much lying when I say I've tried desperately to avoid tipping my hand as far as how I feel about his scripts. He also wrote (on DS9) "The Visitor," "Things Past," "In The Pale Moonlight," and in a show called Star Trek: Voyager, of which I vaguely remember hearing, the episode "Fury." He was in the room for the DS9 story "Statistical Probabilities," and for Voyager on "Blink Of An Eye," "Ashes to Ashes," "Author, Author," and "Dragon's Teeth." (Sadly, none of these has been recapped by the redoubtable and lovely [Keckler](#), because none of them involve creepy/hilarious space sex with Scottish ghosts or salamanders from the future, or I'd link to them.) But which does all add up to something and that something is a hunch, so because I love you, I did some research on this hunch of mine, and yeah: what Taylor writes about is writers, writing, meta-narrative, and most especially, time-space anomalies such that two contrasting narratives are brought into, like, violent conflict and then play out in parallel, each commenting on the other. Like this one, which mainly seems to have pissed people off.

So Galactica and the Fleet are anchored near a strange moon. As the camera pans across lots of pilots and crewmen lying in bed, peacefully, two voices sing. Two voices: Chip Six and Gaius, over the images of sleepy little crewmen. "Close your eyes, go to sleep / Baby's in the cradle counting sheep / Climb up to your house of dreams / Baby's in the cradle fast asleep..." In the brig, Gaius is robotically ripping fabric into strips. Not like he's a Cylon, but in fact like he has lost his marbles. "...Should I die before I wake," he sings in the same melody, and Chip Six appears, concerned, looking at him as he continues to OCD all over these ripped clothes. "Sorry," he says, even though he's totally not,

"improvising." She assures him he's doing the right thing, and he can barely hear her. He's on autopilot. She says his name tenderly, again, and he notices her only barely, then drifts toward sleep on her shoulder. The Marine standing guard bashes the bars, jerking him awake and screaming. Cruel and unusual, no? He wakes up and they begin knotting the strips of fabric into a...rope. Yeah. (In addition to admiring the structure, I think I cried the entire way through this episode both times I've watched it so far. This has got to be the darkest episode of the series, or at least tied with "[Pegasus](#)." Tell me the difference between the two stories. I'm serious.) They begin to sing again, in two voices. "Close your eyes go to sleep / Baby's in the cradle counting sheep..." As they sing about the house of dreams, Gaeta tosses and turns; he finally sits up as Chip Six adjusts the noose around Gaius's neck. He wakes up from his sleep-deprivation delirium long enough to balk, to ask for more time to think. With the noose around his neck, Six nuzzles his cheek. "Too late, Gaius. It's time to learn the truth." She kicks the bunk out from under him. He drops. Nowhere to stand.

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Gaeta comes rushing up to the Sergeant standing guard, claiming he's got direct presidential authorization to speak with Gaius; the Sergeant blows him off. Chip Six, as Gaius dies: "That's it, Gaius. Deep breaths. Deep breaths."

"That's it, Gaius, Deep breaths. Deep breaths," says a Six, smiling like Caprica, as Gaius awakes, in a resurrection pod. He doesn't move, just stares up at her above him. "The first time's the hardest. You're doing wonderfully." There are three identical Sixes, attending to him. Playing midwife. He stares around, covered in goo. The three of them smile at each other at his shock, then elation: he's alive. "I'm alive. Thank God, I'm alive!" The Six above him, in whose lap he sits, visually, smiles down like a virgin: "I always told you to have faith." He addresses the Six on his right hand: "Then no one was betrayed. I was never one of them. I am one of you." I mean to say that Gaius Baltar, hair down to here, beard gone wild and woolly, having just learned that he is possessed of immortal life and that he's been washed clean of all his sins, addresses the woman on his right. The Six above him strokes his face and hair: "Is that what you think, Gaius?" He speaks to himself, the usual: "I always knew I was



different. Special. Maybe a little gifted." The Six above strokes his face; the Six on his left hand strokes lower. "Oh..." he says, surrounded by Six; the Six on his left hand begins to draw blood. He chuckles sexily, then yelps that she's hurting him; the other two Sixes join in, stripping him of flesh. His blood clouds the water as he screams: "What's wrong?" The Six on his left is clear: "You are, Gaius. You're not Cylon, you're human. And you're dead," she says, loud, pushing him under. The pod becomes a deep and dark pool -- water, not the stuff of resurrection, marred with his blood -- and she follows him down, pushing him deeper, kissing him passionately: her lips on his.

Gaius lies on the floor, the Sergeant astraddle him, enjambed on his body, administering CPR. He begins to breathe again. Gaeta (Come! On! It couldn't have been Gaeta?) runs for Doc Cottle. Gaius lies on the floor, forgotten, and the sing-song nursery rhyme music plays again, into the credits. 41,403 survivors this week: add Sharon, Hera, and Gaius. No Caprica yet, on the official roster. Hopefully never. Love makes you do some pretty low stuff, though. Watch.

Lee leads Chief through the Hangar Bay toward a whole new set: Joe's Bar, which I would assume proceeds directly from the destruction of Cloud 9 and the host of civilians now aboard Galactica. There are people playing pool, listening to loud bar music, drinking themselves silly, yelling, all that stuff. Chief giggles. Apollo introduces him to the barkeep, Eponymous Joe, in a way in which it is made clear that Lee spends a shitload of time here. Joe offers him some of "the good stuff," and Chief good-naturedly chuckles about how he is grateful, because it's not like he's going home tonight. Oh? Ho ho ho! You don't say, Galen. Getting a little hard, up at camp Whiny Pines? (Two men who married the easy choice, the girl that was in love with him, the one that wasn't scary or complicated; two men who settled. He'll never love her as much as she loves him. Two men seeing the cracks for the first time in "normal," in the lives they wanted on New Caprica, the cracks in everything they wanted. To be the kind of man who could overlook the damage he'd already done before marriage was even in the equation. The way she apparently can. These two heroes. I'm not going to gloat; I'm sad.) Apollo's shocked: he thought he was in this club alone. Has Chief ever laughed this much in a scene? How much of this is theatre? Chief cracks they should have sold tickets such was their

fight, and toasts to marriage: "Why we build bars." I hate to see anything caged; they order another drink. It's harsh on their throats, and they shiver, but they keep drinking.

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Love. It's why we build bars. Cottle (Hi!) bitches at Tigh, Roslin, and Adama about their shitty sleep deprivation plan, noting that "psychosis can make a man do strange things," even men who didn't start out shit-hot nuts in the first place. He also mentions Baltar's "little hunger strike." These people, you guys. "The bastard wants to die that bad, I say let him," says Tigh. I kind of agree, but Roslin is not into basic freedoms right now: "Bottom line, we need Baltar to talk. If the other Cylon saw the same symbols that we saw, they could be on their way to Earth, they could be setting up an ambush by now. I'm betting that after tonight, he'll be more willing. Doc, wait an hour or two. I want him cogent. I also don't want him to starve." He asks what the hell she wants him to do about that; he already knows. "I expect you to make sure he eats," she says, like she's offering him another helping of tiramisu. Tigh heads out to get some security cameras into the cell, lest Gaius and Chip Six try something else; Gaeta tries to follow him out, but Roslin stops him.

"What exactly were you doing going to see Dr. Baltar in the middle of the night?" Adama and Roslin look at him intently as he makes a sneaky face. "I...couldn't sleep?" Roslin nods; she knows about that. "And I guess...I thought he might be willing to talk to me?" Adama says kindly, "We understand. Just...leave his interrogation to us." Felix is Latin for a particularly innocent happiness: it connotes a luck in life, as in a felicitous coincidence. Gaeta leaves with a sad "of course," and alone, Adama and Roslin have a whole conversation without talking about how nobody ever understood the relationship between Felix and Gaius before, but they're not about to look under that rock now.

Lee comes home drunk, slamming the hatch behind him; Dualla's doing paperwork by the midnight oil. He tells her the Chief said hi, and she asks if he's one of Lee's new drinking buddies. So that's new, then. The drinking. Lee complains drunkenly that he'd invite her if she hadn't been clear about her disinterest. "Not what I'm asking," she says, using enjambment in her everyday life. What he's saying is that he has nothing to hide; what she's

saying is that's just a technicality. He lies down, whining that he's got a briefing at 0500, and she asks if they're still having dinner tomorrow; she cleared her schedule for a date. Some of his thoughts are hanging out all unsightly: he sighs aloud, "Dammit," then reassures her in an outside voice that they're on. "It'd be nice for a husband and wife to occasionally..." He begins to snore; she says, "Forget it," to an empty room. As long as she's got him caged she wants him comfortable; as long as he's harboring secrets she might as well have the last word. "Forget it," she says, like he doesn't know the door's open: there's no cage at all. She's been waiting for this; the door's always been open.

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Roslin enters Baltar's cell, telling the Sergeant to leave the door open. She speaks tenderly, friendly, softly: "Hi." He stares at her and she hands him his glasses. There's a totally frackin' unnecessary flashback to this callback from [New Caprica](#), in case you don't remember that, but not in a way where it illustrates anything beyond the token gesture of getting back some small amount of power, the ability to focus on objects, while you stay in your cage. He finally takes them, and then she pulls out a tiny little tiparillo Swisher Kara smoke, lighting it with a Zippo. He stares like it is a naked lady on fire; she finally hands it over. Creature comforts; that's the clincher, always. (This is the first time I have found Gaius attractive in the entire history of the show; that's so, so troubling. I've been in Austin too long, is what that means.) His desperation as he takes the smoke from her is not easy to watch. "TouchÃ©, Madame President," he says, standing as she sits. "I have no wish to see you suffer," she says. He points out -- a little crazily -- that he recently had a feeding tube forced up his nose and down his throat. Imagine that, choking and breathing like that. Not even having that choice. Not even having that much room to stand.

She grins brightly, putting on lots of faces at once, trying to keep control; [last time she fled the room altogether](#). "Everybody's gotta eat!" she says, with a little steel behind it, but mostly like a crazy TV personality. "It's for your own good. And it's nothing," she says, segueing like a master, "Compared to what many of our people were subjected to in your jail cells on New Caprica." He sits, eyes sad: "Not my jails. The Cylons'." She calls it academic, and tells him to just tell her what she wants to know, and she'll

end his suffering. "I know nothing about the Cylon plans or their whereabouts. I witnessed nothing in that Temple. My information on Cylon intelligence is limited, to say the least." No kidding! You could not have chosen a worse lunch table to sit at on the Basestar if you'd shown up with Sharon Agathon herself. There's no way you could get in with the cool kids acting like that. How weird is it to have this whole thing go down in a way where he actually is innocent? He can't tell them anything, because he doesn't know anything, and argue the precedents of U.S. law or not, intention is crucial to treason, and anyway that's not what it's about. We're still in guns-in-the-Temple territory, it's just now, instead of Tigh, it's the most surprising people. "Truth and reconciliation" can mean shit-all when you've got the man himself in your hands, right? When there's no rule about what you can and can't do to him, because for good or ill he's your racial scapegoat? The one person that all of humanity can agree deserves to go to Hell? The way he carries all those sins upon his back -- and there's no rule that says you can't break him. The second-tier types already had Gaeta to kick around: for Roslin and Adama, only the best.

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"Prior to the attack on the Colonies, did you have high-level security clearance?" He doesn't get it, I think honestly, for a second; doesn't click into the gap she's left. "Did you tell anybody about it? Did you let someone into the defense mainframe? The blonde woman that I saw you with on Caprica just prior to the attack?" Chip Six appears and warns him she'll airlock his ass so fast, and he fugues out, staring away from Laura, and one of my favorite things in the whole episode happens, so fast you might miss it. As he's staring at Six, Roslin gets pissed at him for fading, and off-camera flicks the lighter on and off in a split second, to get his attention. It's so fucking awesome, and so in character: "Yo, over here, motherfucker." He looks at her, boggled, and Chip Six puts her hands around his neck: "Unless, of course, that prospect no longer frightens you." Roslin watches him: it's his hands around his neck. Two things here, before the big freak-out: While it's really the same story -- the story of five marriages in five parallel threads -- there are some specific thematic visuals in play right now: Gaius and his neck, and Gaius and light. Keep those eyes open, because they're both used very specifically. This is the second instance of the neck thing and the first

iteration of the light, beyond last episode, which was one long moth story. The breath -- spirit -- and the light. The only true things, once they've taken away even your right to die in captivity. The list of true things keeps shrinking.

"Lies," he says, shaking them both off. "All lies. A rehash of all the other old lies. I did not collude in the genocide of my own people." Laura stands and steps toward him, looking him in the eye before sighing in disgust. A bit later -- though it's an instant cut -- he's crouched against the wall of the cell, on the floor. Where Laura was, when she didn't even have her shoes. "This is Devlin and Maryanne McAllister, and their son and daughter. This is a family of four that was gunned down in their own home on suspicion of harboring insurgents," she spits, holding out an octagonal photo of dead folks. They both start talking at the same time, all over each other. He basically claims that the occupation was no more his fault than the genocide, and that her tactics aren't about legitimate threats or clear and present danger, but about scapegoating him for her pound of flesh, and demands a fair trial. While all of that is going on, Laura is losing her entire fucking mind. It's literally, actually, the scariest thing I think I've ever seen. The concept of Mary McDonnell yelling at me like that, even if she was acting, makes me want to first shit and then airlock myself. I mean to say that she trips the crazy fantastic. I don't know what else to say. You have to see it to believe it. Mary McDonnell's seriously the scariest person and the most scary-awesome actor on the face of the planet. Imagine if you will that you are four years old, and you have just driven the family car into the living room, killing Stephen Hawking and some orphans. And instead of just your mom yelling at you, terrified and enraged and hating herself, it's also every mean teacher and mean librarian and police officer and meth addict that's ever made you think you were about to get a black eye. Plus, like...Kali. And the Furies. And Sean Young.

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That's what Gaius's feeling right now. And the reason for that is that he is four years old, and has driven a succession of family cars into the living room, killing a succession of Stephen Hawkings and creating orphans, whom he then kills. Like ten times, and each time is more of an accident than the last time. It's kind of funny, but mostly it explains why he's crazy, and why

he's really really sad.

So she starts winging the photographs in his face and tuning up the orchestra for the freak-out like so: "I just wondered if you recognized even one of these faces. Did any image get through to you on the rare occasion when you ventured out from behind your sandbags and your razor wire to see what was happening to your people?" This is where the first big crack happens: her grief is larger than the Olympic Carrier and all the ships left behind. This is all on her. "Your people!" she screams, full of hate and fire; he's nearly in tears. "I need to know! Now! Colonel Tigh, get in here! Get this man out of here, he's not gonna talk. I want you to take him, I want you to toss him out the nearest airlock." This is the second big crack: she does this jerky self-agggravated hand movement on "airlock" that she's only done a couple of times on this show, like when diva singers get weird in the hand area, or like Imogen Heap all the time, and it always means she's this close to fucking killing you for real. She screams for the guards, and there's another instant cut to the corridor, where McDonnell and Callis continue to get all New School on your ass, dancing back and forth very stompily across each other's lines and shooting laser beams of acting at each other.

Pulling him with an uncountable, constantly moving body of Marines, Laura and Gaius come upon the Wall of Remembrance. She continues to scream like a lunatic. "Take a good look, Doctor, these are just a fraction of the people you sent to their deaths -- rather fitting they should see you take your last steps," she says passably well, even though it's awkward. I love the implication that they could have gone any way to the nearest airlock, but they just happened to choose this route. He shouts to stop, and points out a photo on the wall. "Yes! Show me. Show me! Let him go. Let him go. Keep your guns up!" she screams. Gaius pulls the photo off the wall: "This man. His name was Adrian Bauer. He was my lab assistant for three years on Caprica." Roslin screams that she doesn't fucking care. "He was Geminese. I got him a visa. I introduced him to his wife. I am godfather to their first child I wouldn't do anything to harm this man or his family. Or anybody's family. I am not a murderer. I am innocent. Why won't you believe me?" Roslin freaks out and commences the airlocking, and as they drag him away he screams again that he should get points for figuring out about Hera shooting Laura in the cancer. Still thinking that's on the table. He makes me so sad.



How much of this is theatre?

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Commercial. How much of it was theatre? Adama stands up in his office, where he's meeting with Tigh and Roslin about their little comedy routine called "Freak Out The Prisoner," which was totally not faking except for the dying part. Adama congratulates them on a job well done, with the psychological abuse. "Either he's got more stones than I gave him credit for," says Tigh, "Or..." Enjambment, but this is Tigh -- Adama knows what he's thinking: "Or he knew you were bluffing." Because the truth, that Gaius doesn't know shit about Jack, is too sad to even consider seriously as a possibility. Tigh stands and asks what next, what possible abuse they can engage him in now that they're halfway to V For Vendetta with the creepy fakeness, and Adama admits that it can still get worse. Roslin finally looks up, speaking softly: "Admiral?" Adama tells them about how the Colonies had MKUltra and they would induce hallucinogens in which the subject believed "their very survival was at stake." (You don't need drugs for that: forty-six episodes of that show *Battlestar Galactica* are proof that people will totally freak out just as bad on the threat alone. I'll spare you the speech about how that's a hallucination too, for now.) Roslin sits back with a migraine; Tigh's loving it. Adama talks about how the interrogators, given this setup, would naturally change from adversary to lifeline, from torturer to sherpa. From sinister, traitorous, inhuman girlfriend to a perfectly loving, omniscient angel, sent from God. That's something that might happen, if you thought your soul was on the edge of destruction, Adama is saying. If you were crazy. Roslin stands up, looking from Tigh to Adama: "Are you telling me we have these drugs aboard *Galactica*?" You had something that dangerous in your pocket this whole time? A whole new way to steal control?

Kara takes a drink and thanks Sam for being so "accommodating"; he doesn't like the sound of that. "Your estranged, two-timing bitch of a wife calls you up for a quickie, and you hop on the first shuttle? I'd say yeah," she says, with a conspiratorial grin. He sighs. "I've been thinking about some stuff, Kara." She indulges it, but you can see she's done with him; you can see underneath it that she isn't. She's got him caged and he's trying to get control, so he engages in some very fucking lazy dialogue of the *Makes Sense Don't It* category. "Like, what

that crazy skinjob Leoben said about you and a special destiny. I mean, what if there's something to that?" She's silent for a second, gathering her armor, and then breaks out in a grin, cracking that "Kara Thrace and Her Special Destiny" sounds like a bad cover band. The joke's crappy enough that it works on an emotional level; I cannot say that this was the author's intent. "Think about it, though. Why did I survive all those months on Caprica, waiting for you to return, if I was just gonna walk out on you? And you, I mean, did you go through that hell, locked in the fake house with that fake husband, just so you could ditch me?" Can somebody explain this speech to me? That makes zero sense. "I married you knowing you were totally going to fuck me up, so doesn't that prove that you're an alien"? I really don't get this part at all. She won't answer him, and he theorizes some more, and then suddenly: "Do you love him?" Her jaw drops and her stomach drops and her eyes: "...What?" But he's not employing enjambment: he's talking about Lee. That was Kara that filled in that particular blank with something really fucking creepy. "Lee, Kara. Do you love Lee?" She nearly stops crying: relieved, and then a whole new level of pain. She sets her jaw, gets right with it. "Maybe," she says, and he exhales. Finally. "I don't know." Sam shakes his head. "Then you gotta go to him." She stares at him silently, without answering. "Go to him," he says, like she doesn't know the door's open: there's no cage at all. He's been waiting for this; the door's always been open.

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Apollo comes home, gets into his civvies. As he's changing, he tells Dee he's heading to the bar. Dualla's tired of being caged: "If you're gonna see Kara, just admit it." Apollo protests, and she sniffs, angry now. Righteous. "Yeah, you both told me: Lee won't cheat, he's too noble. Only problem is, it's all a crock, isn't it?" A technicality. The end of a line, with nothing to stand on. "You know what the only problem is? The only problem is that you don't trust me. That's it. And this is just your own frackin' insecurities talking. Same as always. I mean, right from the get-go, I...the very first morning that I proposed..." Seven-letter word for pussy; what a house does as it ages; what a plaintiff does when they're tired of fighting. "You know what? Forget it. This is fracking pointless." He heads for the door but he doesn't mean it; "No, you're right," she says. He turns, surprised. "I did see this coming. And I was naive enough to marry you anyway. And you

want to know why, Lee?" She inhales, tears up, guilty and ashamed and angry. "Because I loved you. I loved you so frackin' much. I thought I was lucky! That's right, lucky." He looks away and nearly starts crying; he knows what's hanging from that word. "That I could have you. For just as long as you or Kara would let me." The shame in that. The sickening amount of settling she did, and how much it cost. He can't handle it, comes to her, sad, takes her arm, murmuring: "Come on." The kind of love that wouldn't watch her say this out loud. She whimpers, and pulls away, and looks him in the eye. She's sad, and strong, and soft, and hard. "It's not a marriage, Lee. This is a lie. You want to be with Kara? Go ahead. I won't stand in your way." He shakes his head. "It's over." She stalks out, he doesn't follow. He built this one himself; he keeps building.

Kara shakes her head sadly, and he roughly pulls back the curtain from their bed. Their marriage bed, a bunk in the middle of the pilots' quarters, and all around them doing paperwork and writing letters, pushups and reading magazines, the tiny lives all around them and the way we dramatize our own. Her dormitory life and how he tried to fit into it. "This was fun," he says, and she pulls him in for another kiss. The kind of love that hated hearing him say goodbye. "I love you," he says, but she couldn't believe it until he hurt her. Until he sent her to Lee. Alone, she snatches the curtain closed and nearly takes a drink. In her hand she holds a chain, and on that chain is Zak's ring, Apollo's tags; on a chain you can see all the boys she killed or drove away. She built this one herself; she keeps building.

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Cottle prepares the needle, Layne Ishay assisting. She's the one that saved Adama when Boomer shot him, she's always around. She is not Racetrack! New things every day. I was always confused about that. Gaius swears he's a human being with rights. He doesn't understand the way the world works anymore. Ishay wipes down his forehead; her hand becomes Chip Six's and his pleas shift to her. "Please help me!" She's not really being very sympathetic this week. "I'm not sure I can, Gaius. Pain is one thing, but this... Without free will, what are you?" Exactly what Adama wants, apparently. "Can God even pity such a creature?" Baltar speaks to Chip Six, but it's Roslin who gets hit with the gap this time, at the end of the line: "Why not just admit you're doing

this for your own satisfaction?" Right between her eyes. This is the last crack; this is rock bottom. I kept asking? This is it, finally. "That's the truth, isn't it?" It is. "I don't know why you're not putting the needle in yourself." He screams as Cottle injects him; a new song begins to play, and he goes out. Adama tells everyone to avoid loud noise; orders Ishay to "put the head strap on." I was already crying, so this line just made me hiccup and feel sick. The last thing we see is Roslin, stepping forward. Into the light.

Baltar wakes up in dark, unending water. Not the stuff of resurrection, but close: the ocean everybody's got in there. He screams, nothing to stand on, nothing to sight on, just black water below and black sky above. "Where am I? Oh, my God, where am I?" A light shines down on his face; he floats like Lee, arms thrown out. Hair down to here and beard wild and woolly, with his arms thrown out: abandoned by God and Man both. Shouldering the sins of entire worlds and races; tied up with destiny. Still human.

"What are you saying?" asks Lee. Kara repeats: if she leaves Sam, will he leave Dee? Proving Dualla right once again? He tears up, surprised by enormity: "My Gods, Kara. I mean, you know, how do I know that tomorrow you're not gonna pull another 180?" You don't; she will. "I mean, these are our fracking marriages we're talking about. It's not some stupid dogfight we can just jink our way out of." She couldn't believe it until he hurt her. Until he went back to Dee. Her lip curls: "Think about it, Lee. That's what you're best at." She stalks away; he chokes and almost follows her. He keeps building.

Gaius continues to scream; Adama's voice booms out like a kakapo, like the voice of Zeus himself. Like the voice of God. "Can you hear my voice? Can you hear me, Doctor? I'm looking for you, Doctor. We can't find you. Can you tell us where you are?" Gaius tells them he's in the water; the drums start slapping. "It's cold, and it's dark." And he's alone. He begins to thrash wildly in the water, scared. "I can't see anything." Adama asks if there's anything at all he can sight. "Look for the light. Can you see the light?" Adama tells him to reach for it. Somebody asks Gaius Baltar to reach for the light. Roslin stares down at him, pity dawning. The light becomes Baltar's eye, becomes the nuclear bloom on Caprica. "Caprica Six. She saved my life. Shielded me

from the explosion." He remembers. Ask him how he finds his way, how he charts space, how he fills in the gaps, ask him to reach for the light: Six. Six, every time. Screaming his lama sabachthani, floating in a dream, he calls on angels. Roslin asks straight-up -- irritated as usual with Gaius taking time to deal with Chip Stuff -- if he conspired with Caprica to subvert the Colonial defense system. Treason laws always start big conversations, for the same reason there are pre-nups and faithfulness clauses: there's no rule that says, "You must follow these rules," because that makes no sense, so the rule that says that has to be appropriately huge and deadly and scary. Being a citizen and being in love both take place at the end of a line with no punctuation: it's up to you to decide where you stand. But did he fall, or was he pushed? "Conspiracy requires intent!"

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Gaius goes off here on a really inadvisable word ramble about all the stuff we either already knew and didn't need confirming, or which is beside the point and muddles the issue. Sometimes you'll have a scene -- rarely on this show, to be fair -- where you get scared that somebody flipping past will see it, and think to himself or herself, "Now I know what that show is about, and it is not for me." And this is one of them: Callis devouring scenery at a furious rate, without anybody to act against, in a crazy stupid monologue that sounds like anime, that goes like this: "I never intended...but she said deep down, I'd always suspected. But I didn't know. How could I know? Did I conspire? Did I? No! No. I don't know. No. It wasn't my fault. It wasn't my fault!" Seriously, just like that. I would say it's the big flaw of the episode, but really it's just the same flaw, writ large: too big in concept, too hard to pull off. A for effort and A for ambition, but kind of an F for being embarrassing and unbelievable in the same way as watching somebody sing karaoke. Roslin stares at Adama as Gaius begins to weep. "I am not responsible!" shrieks the Doctor, scaring Ishay, who knocks over a tray and sends the whole MKUltra scenario off the deep end. The imaginary water starts roiling around Gaius, and the apocalypse happens on Caprica, and there's his eyeball again, and he remembers Caprica in the pool of his old-slash-imaginary condo, and then he's raising her in the hallucination, out of the water.

More Sin City bullshit talk over various on-the-nose clips of the

variety where he says "hand" and there's a hand, or "seduce" and she's kissing him. That kind of thing.

"She...Caprica Six...she chose me. Chose me over all men. Chosen to be seduced, taken by the hand. Guided between the light and the dark. But is she an angel, or is she a demon? Is she imaginary, or is she real? Is she my own voice, or the voice of...?"

I mean...and this is the half of the episode people liked. "She chose me, over all men." "Is she an angel, or is she a demon? Is she imaginary, or is she real?" Fuck you. I realize he's an eight-year-old boy that thinks like this, but he didn't write the script. You did. And it's very nice, which makes the shitty stuff really stand out.

He pushes her under the water or into fellatio or something, and then begins to drown, all alone. "I can't stay afloat much longer!" Adama demands "details" about the Cylons and threatens to let him drown (which he pronounces with a very East-L.A. /d/ at the end, like the past tense) "alone, in the dark." Adama turns off the light; the water goes black. Gaius's face, both in the lab and in the water, contorts with fear, and when he screams, he screams in two voices at once.

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Lee spins his wedding ring on the bar at Joe's, stabbing his finger down as it slows. Chief approaches, and signals for a drink. He's really sad. It's really sad. "Why is it so frackin' hard?" he asks, but Lee has no answer. "Why can't we just get back to normal?" He laughs, wondering what the hell "normal" means anyway. Remembers when she forgave him, and they got married, and Baby Nick was born, and it was dirty but they were happy. Normal. Apollo sips his drink, Chief stares into space, into the gap, imagining conversation after conversation. Lee makes a decision and his lips go firm. "Chief, you can tell me if I'm out of line here, but, um...do you ever think about Sharon?" Chief stares at his glass, blurts, "No," then chugs. Lee refills his drink and presses: "Come on. You never wonder...what if?" Chief picks up the glass and looks him right in the eye: "No." He chugs the drink again, and bashes the glass down on the bar, and wanders away, leaving a gap, a tiny little space for Lee to fill with anything. With guilt. Turns out he's alone in that club after all, he decides,



although he's wrong. It's a parallel we didn't have time to make before, but it's valid. Lee stares at his ring and wonders how we get back to normal -- how everybody gets out alive.

"Look, don't leave me! Don't leave me. I know I'm flawed. I never claimed to be... Yeah, mistakes, mistakes were made. Terrible mistakes. Were they mine? Am I solely to blame? I was a player, that's all. I was a player. I was struggling, trying to find my place in God's plan." It's Gaius talking. Who'd you think? Can you name a character who isn't screaming this throughout the entire episode? Roslin begins to cry.

"I never intended for certain things to happen! Doesn't that matter?" (Still Gaius.) Adama brings up his trip with the Cylons to the Temple of Five, asks about the Eye. "What did it tell them? What did it tell them about Earth?" Gaius can't find the words to explain how for the Cult of Just The Two Of Us, Earth was secondary to stuff that's none of Bill's business; the light comes back. "What were you looking for, Doctor? What were you looking for?" A thousand things he doesn't have words for, so he'll substitute Three's. The black ocean becomes a resurrection pod, but there's just water in it. He looks very clean, and very beautiful. Hands caress him, all around, and many voices sing, wordlessly. "Their faces," Gaius says, "But they wouldn't show them to me." Roslin asks whose faces; "The Five. The Final Five." Roslin wows. The camera pulls back to reveal the owners of the hands: the burned, dead children of Aerelon, of Caprica and Geminon, of Picon and Sagittaron, Tauron and Virgon. All his victims, his orphaned and his irradiated and his burnt and starving, the legacy, the billion children of Gaius Baltar. God looks nothing like that! Everybody knows that.

"I thought I might be one of them," he says. As the burned children still surround him. "I told them I wanted to be one of them." He'll always call himself a victim, Bill will say. He'll always elect to be among the children of the end of the world; without that, what is he? Surrounded by his legacy. All those burned children: Kara Thrace and Sam Anders, Anastasia Dualla and Lee Adama. Saul and Ellen; Laura and Bill. Gina. Boomer and Athena, Helo and Hera, Cally and Chief. Remember when he was President, and ruled a planet full of orphans? Remember how the world ended, and keeps ending -- all on his shoulders, every time -- and all these orphaned children are just trying to get back

home?

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He leaves it blank and he's not talking about those kids, or the one in the visions either: he's talking about the Cylons. Roslin fills in the blank; he lives in the blank right now. "A Cylon. Why?" He opens up as the children resume singing: "All my sins forgiven." And the children could come unto him, and be healed, and none of it forgotten. As far as I'm concerned he just indicted himself. "Are you a Cylon, Doctor Baltar?" In the dream, he shakes his head; in the lab he nearly tears in two: "No." The children pull their hands from the water, not touching him. He's alone. "That's not good enough, Doctor," says Adama, intimately, into his ear. "Tell me. Tell me what you told the Cylons. What do they know? Tell me or I'll let you go, Doctor." The lifeline; the sherpa. And see what he does. "I'll have to let you go. Tell me or I'll let you go, Doctor. I'll have to let you go. I'll have to let you go. I'll have to let you go."

A child climbs into the pod, astraddle him, pushes him into the water, deeper and deeper, hands around his throat. She doesn't kiss him. They fall past the frame, away from the light, into the darkness; all you can see is black water. There's nowhere to focus on.

Lee stumbles down a corridor, coming home again; he brushes against a crewman and shouts to watch where they're going; his ring tings to the floor and he begins to crawl. People stare and whisper and watch, but he's all alone on the floor, nowhere to stand. He shouts, a shame; he begins to shove crates to the ground, tearing into the cargo stacks looking for the ring. One of the first things you learn in the Academy is that symbols matter: they're like pieces of your heart you can look at. He falls against the wall, crying; stuck.

"Admiral, we're losing him. That's enough." Roslin nods, sad, agreeing with Cottle. "I'm putting an end to this freak show right now."

In Adama's office, Roslin's reading from her Scrolls as Bill pours the three of them (including Tigh) a drink. "Now, listen to this. Five Final Cylon models. 'Five pillars of the Temple, for the five priests devoted to the One Whose Name Cannot Be Spoken.'" How

beautiful would it be if Laura was the one who figured it out? After all this? Tigh calls it "mumbo jumbo" but Laura's seen it before, seen the world line up to prove this stuff right. "He's holding a lot back, Admiral. I'm sure of it." Adama suggests "more direct methods," like the civil rights abuses to date -- the once so horrific even Laura Roslin blinked -- just haven't been effective enough, and Laura is totally grossed out. (Meanwhile Tigh's like, "Direct methods? I'm listening!") Bill sits and he drinks with Saul. Laura's still thinking. "[We tried the stick, it's time to try the carrot](#)." The thing he's most deeply afraid of is [that] even if he talks, we'll kill him." Tigh thinks this is rather smart of him. Bill can't look at anybody, because Laura's right and he just realized they're in the Circle and they didn't even know it. "We have to ease his fear," she says, picking her words very effing carefully and with maximal plausible deniability, which is another word for that gap. "Make him believe that if he collaborates, at the very least he'll have his life." Adama's like, "Not buying it." She sips her drink; it's harsh on her throat, and she shivers but she keeps talking. "We have to find someone he trusts." Bill looks at Laura hard. The enjambment kicks into high gear. Watch it spin!

Gaeta stares at Gaius, huddled against a wall of his cell.

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"As perverse as it may seem, I may actually owe these people a debt of gratitude."

Dualla stares at Lee, sitting in Joe's Bar.

"You know, I realize there's probably nothing I can say that can make this right."

She says nothing, but the tears are coming.

"But there's something you need to know. I asked you to marry me because I was in love with you. Just like I'm in love with you now."

"They forced me to admit my failings."

On camera, Gaius continues: "And now that I have, I feel positively liberated."

Dualla hasn't touched her drink. Love is the Turing Test for people. There's no relativity to the apocalypse which means Gaius's betrayal, or not, equates exactly to Lee's, even if it never happened. Or the rules Bill's breaking in himself.

"You were right, I loved Kara. And you know, maybe there's a part of me that always will."

"In my heart, I know I have always done what I've had to do." Gaius again.

"But I married you." He almost breaks down; his voice goes quiet. "I married you. And you know, when I look back at our marriage, at the time that we have spent together... You are good for me, Dee. And I need you. And I don't think I ever really realized that, till I knew that I was losing you."

Gaeta: "I can't promise you a trial, Doctor. But I'm sure that if you'll give them something."

It's Dualla's face, but Gaeta's voice. The tears coming down now. "...Anything."

"But please just give me another chance. That's all I'm asking. Just give me a chance. Please." Who's that talking? Everybody. Nobody. Anybody who ever betrayed anybody else. Anybody who ever loved.

From above, we watch Gaeta step forward, spread out star charts on the table. "These charts that I've been using, to plot our course to Earth..." He sits, nearly comfortable at the table, back in place, asking for approval from Dr. Gaius Baltar. Roslin watches this scene play out. "I've never been confident of my calculations."

Gaeta puts down his pen; Gaius picks it up again, back in his role. Unaware how easily Gaeta just caged him up again.

"That's lucky, because the calculations are wrong. I detect a number of inconsistencies right off the bat. You see, these figures here are wrong."

Gaeta stares up at the camera for a moment too long; Gaius notices before Gaeta can stare at something else that doesn't

exist.

"The Cylon navigation systems are far more advanced than our own, but I have managed to commit many of their algorithms to memory," he says. "If you can offer them this kind of help, I'm certain at the very least they'll spare your life." Gaeta is smooth, buttered, a traitor. "Maybe we can even get you out of this cell, and offer you some proper quarters," he says, almost excitedly. Gaius looks at him and watches him say this; if you pause it, you can see the exact moment his heart breaks.

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There are rules you don't question and there are things you don't do.

Dualla watches Lee weeping for awhile, with her tears coming down; she takes his hand. When he looks up, she nods her head, just a little.

In exactly the same position, Gaius stares at Gaeta: "Creature comforts. There's the clincher."

Gaeta pretends ignorance; it's too late. "Where is it?" asks Gaius, ashamed of himself for believing even this long. How much of this was theatre? Is there a time going back that anything was real? Where's he supposed to stand? "Um, where is what, Doctor?" Gaius drops any semblance of anything; he's over it. His wrists flap as he gets sardonic: "Where is what?" He stares at the ceiling. Gaeta is worried, and sick, and sad. They both look up into camera. Roslin goes fuuuuuck. "So much for that little stratagem," says Tigh. Gaius waves at the camera: "Hello." What happens next?

Lee and Dee are still holding hands, at their table. He opens his mouth to say something, with a sad and somehow obtrusive, somehow perfect pop song playing, like the song for all breakups or fake makeups. Dualla spots Anders and Kara across the bar.

Anders spots Dualla and Lee across the bar. Kara catches Lee's eye, everybody retreats to corners, Kara clears her throat. Anders offers to leave, if she's not comfortable, and she touches his forehead with hers, smiling sweetly. He orders two whiskeys, straight up.

"I should have known that you'd betray me."

Gaius stands and begins to pace, trying to find a way out of this new cage. "What did you tell them? That you stayed behind till the grisly end on New Caprica, so you could what? So you could, uh -- you could feed information to the Resistance? Who do you think allowed you to do that?" Gaeta's jaw drops, grossed out: "That's a lie!" The sad thing is, it's not. There's nowhere to stand. "No, it's not a lie. You think I'm blind? You see, I literally had a gun pointed to my head [unnecessary flashback], but nobody forced you to play both sides." He's been gone all season; this gives him certain forms of blindness about what's gone on, but also certain clarities: Gaeta's not a very forgiving person, as we'll see shortly, but most of it's pointed back at himself.

"So I'm asking you...who is the real traitor in this room?"

Lee Adama touches his wife's forehead with his own.

Kara Thrace laughs, clinking a glass with her husband.

Anastasia Dualla Adama smiles at her husband, swallowing it again, singing along. Helping rebuild.

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Sam Anders makes a toast to his wife, and to himself, and to their marriage, and to their recreational drinking: "To the first of many." They down them and order a second round.

Kara doesn't look at Lee, until she does. He's kissing his wife and meeting her eyes. Lee doesn't look at Kara, until he does: she's laughing with her husband. His smile is sad but vindicated: Fine. Somewhere Chief and Cally are working it out. Lee kisses his wife. Kara's laugh carries across the bar; it never sounded so fake.

"I am not a traitor."

Except here, in this room, right now. Except when you're the carrot, Gaeta. But did he fall? Or was he pushed? "Because there are far worse things than being a traitor. Aren't there, Felix? If your friends only knew the truth." He takes him tenderly by the hair, leaning in close. "Don't worry. We'll keep that a secret."



Cut to the camera, looking down as Gaius silently whispers something into his ear; Gaeta's entire body goes stiff with rage. What did he say? It's in the gap.

Roslin cocks her head at the intimacy, and the reaction. Adama realizes they've gotta run, and everybody heads for the brig. Inside, Gaeta throws him down in the other chair: "Get away from me!" He jumps on him, across the gap, astraddle, and shoves the pen through his throat. "Frack you!" he screams.

The Sergeant enters, ordering Gaeta away from the prisoner. "Step away from the prisoner. I will not ask you again." Gaius stares up, betrayed, bleeding out. Moose, hands, pen. Adama tells the Marine to stand down, and orders Gaeta away from Gaius. He's got him in a headlock, like a hostage. How much of this is theatre? "No, no, no, sir, I can't, I can't let him live, not after what he's done." Just now? Or were you waiting all this time?

Roslin flicks her eyes at Bill, and circles toward him: "Mr. Gaeta. Mr. Gaeta, wait please. Look at me. I understand what you're feeling." He shuffles away from her and says she doesn't. I'm starting to feel like that's maybe true. "Yes, I do. The other night, you didn't come here to interrogate Dr. Baltar. You came here to kill him, didn't you? I understand that. I do." She does, but how much of this is theatre? Bill knocks the kid down and Cottle grabs the still-spurting Baltar, while Roslin drops to Gaeta's side. Cottle pronounces Gaius still not dead: "He missed the artery." As Cottle orders a gurney for Gaius, Roslin tells the Marine helping Gaeta up to go easy on him. She just remembered how -- and how close she was to falling into the same gap, with nowhere to stand. Felicitous, isn't it, that once again, circumstances have conspired to stop her before she went too far. I just didn't expect her to be the ones applying the brakes to Bill the dove, of all people. I think Bulldog got to him more than we thought, that's what I think.

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In sickbay, Chip Six drops her heels and slides around onto the bed with Gaius, pronouncing him to hold a certain luck in life, a kind of serendipity. "You're not one of the Five, [but] you certainly have the luck of the Gods." He reminds her/himself that he's "the chosen one," and Chip Six, hilariously, goes, "You didn't go tell them that, did you?" He's a little woozy; he shakes his

head. He's alone on the bed.

"Everybody's gotta have a secret."

(Deleted and then shown anyway, just out of sequence. Maybe it goes here, I don't know. I hope this doesn't keep happening. I like my secret scenes to stay secret, so I don't have to watch them. Except in magical continuity-creating previouslies, which I now think is cute. Roslin tells the Marines to be gentle as they unlock Caprica's shackles in her brand new cell. She's still wearing her black dress from last week. Roslin smiles at her, sits. She isn't wearing her glasses. Caprica stares at the wall and wonders how sick this is going to get. "All we really know is that Baltar was not involved in the attack," says Laura, "and we need more." Caprica finally turns, hard. "And I need to know that I won't be airlocked." Roslin promises, still grinning that scary Roslin grin: "You have my word." Caprica smiles right back. "Like you gave Leoben your word? Before sending him reeling out into space?" They smile hard at each other, crackling. "Yeah," she says, intense: "He told us."

Even more deleted, so much so that I still haven't seen it, but basically Roslin asks her name -- "Caprica," she says, which think about how that's gonna look to a Colonist -- and at least buys that Caprica loves Gaius for real. Caprica asks aloud whether the Colonial judicial system has withered away along with the human conscience -- which I've been wondering since before New Caprica -- and tells Roslin she's not talking unless Gaius gets a fair trial. If he does, she'll volunteer as the primary witness and share whatever Roslin wants to know. It's not like she's going home any time soon; also, I am in love with her.)

The state of the union is this: everything important takes place in the gap. Humanity, democracy, love, union itself takes place in the gap. It's the end of a line of poetry with nobody telling you what comes next, with nowhere to stand and no actual reason to be good, or honest, or strong. Just the gap. And that's you doing the work of creating the poem's total meaning for a second, which makes you love the poem even as the next line adjusts your vector, because it's part of you now. It's your life.

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Roslin lies on the couch in Adama's office. "I told him I didn't take

any satisfaction in seeing his pain, but the truth is I was willing to see him endure a great deal of suffering, in order to get what I wanted. It wasn't some intelligence or some truth. I wanted a genuine admission of guilt." There's a rood screen confessional shadow across her face, by the way, as she's saying this. Just in case you felt like getting slapped by the Catholic guilt with which this episode is infused. Bill shakes his head.

"That's something that you're not gonna get from someone like Baltar. He doesn't see himself that way. It's not who he is. In his eyes he's the victim, not the criminal."

That's everybody, too. She knows he's right; she looks really tired. (But not in a way where she's not luminously beautiful; tired like in her mind.) "It's not too late for him to just disappear," says Bill, still trying to fix her problem, and she sweetly pats him on the arm, smiling sadly. "We can't do that. For all his crimes, he's one of us," she smiles. Halfway there. "So what happens next?" he asks, looking into her eyes, glad all that's over with. William Adama has never seemed so much like a kid as in this episode. I hope he's going to be okay. "We give him his trial," Roslin says, grossed out. He breathes; they sit.

And outside that room, all around them, doing paperwork and writing letters, doing pushups and reading magazines, the tiny lives outside that room, all around them: their people. Their people.

# THE HELO SUIT

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 14 | Aired on 02.10.2007

*The Woman King* - If you love Helo so damn much, why put him front and center in the worst episode of this or any other show in the history of television?

**Recaplet:** Lame!

So Helo has been working, unbeknownst to anybody but the previouslies, with Dualla as the immigrant liaison for the refugees of the Second Exodus. Things are going great with that until a sudden epidemic (kidneys, then respiratory, then immune system; non-airborne; symptoms: coughing, bruised-looking eye makeup, drowsiness) takes hold. The major victims are Sagittaron, who as it turns out aren't the Irish like we thought, but Christian Scientists who eat curry. Everybody talks major shit about them, like always -- particularly Dr. Robert, who's Cottle's civilian counterpart, and who is played by Senator Kelly from X-Men, which is how you know he's a racist. One of the Sagittarons, a Woman named King, lets Helo in on the total secret of how Senator Kelly is killing Sagittarons while pretending to be doctoring them up. Helo gets into fights with every other character on the show, all of whom wish he would stop acting so goddamn superior every week -- even Sharon's like, "You don't get to play the mixed-marriage card forever" -- but of course it's Helo, so he's right, so Senator Kelly is outed as some kind of Mengele who hates curry, and not even he can come up with a rationalization for his behavior, because this episode is just. That. Idiotic. He's like, "Fuck Sagittarons! They don't use medicine because they're stupid! So we won't waste medicine on them! The medicine that they refuse to take! Because see above re: they don't believe in medicine! Which on them would be wasted! So I must murder them instead of not giving them the medicine they so urgently do not want!" Then everybody gives a hundred embarrassing speeches that would have the Green Arrow himself being like, "Dude, you sound kind of boilerplate liberal," and everybody learns a little something about something, it's embarrassing. Like, here is a speech that Adama gives. Ver-fuckin'-batim:

"There's hate, and then there's allowing hate. Two sides of the same coin, really. We're guilty of both. Somewhere, we got lost.

You being the lone voice in the wilderness, we were bound to stay that way for a while. This is my ship. And I owe you an apology."

For real. So then Helo salutes him and goes home with proud posture and kisses his wife and his baby on their motherfucking foreheads, and everybody smiles at everybody else in the smarmiest possible fashion. The end.

**Recap:** Man, remember New Caprica? Kara Thrace was actually on this show, Saul Tigh was my boy-crush, and all the recaps were three pages long. Remember? Of course, that was before [Jacob Two-Two Meets The Poetic Device](#), or even [Yes, The Cylon Storyline Is Boring But If You Say That You're A Racist](#). Well, I've got good news and bad news. The good news is that next week looks like a New Caprica-style, thank you ma'am kind of episode, which I love and so do you: How I Met Your Mother: Adama Edition plus But Is Cally Okay!? The Series equals an explanation on the hamfisted nature of Chief's plotline this season. Should be fun, and not insane, at least on the part of your recapper. The bad news is this: tonight's episode hummed balls, and I took it personally, and I'm going to explain in detail why that is. The "ball-humming" part, not the "took it personally" part. I'm fairly certain the difference will be obvious. Not that there's anything wrong with ball-humming per se, Felix, but in our culture who knows what's offensive? Am I right? Ah, women. Can't live with 'em, can't make PMS jokes due to it having not been 1992 for several years now. And now these robots, oy.

So previously, Helo tells us, some things happened. What he is doing is called "lying egregiously even outwith the priorly defined limits of lying about the previouslies," because these things happened previous not to the episode that we're watching so much as previous to even God and Leoben knowing this shit happened. And I do think it's easy, but in situations like this where it's just clunky and lame not to have it as the actual teaser, it seems like inviting bullshit for its own sake, considering the hyperliteral audience you're dealing with. So Helo was like, "We all made sacrifices, except me, because my Cylon wife was BFF with the old man the whole time you were down there getting your eye poked out," and Tigh was like "the fuck you say," and Sharon was like, "Hey shoot me in the gut because Cylons have crazy physiology," and Helo was like "Sure! Wait, I

totally just shot my wife in the gut!" and everybody was like, "Lot less weird when she's a robot -- ask Tigh, or Cally!" Then Laura Roslin accused Helo (for real) and Gaius (fakewad) as if they were traitors, and they said no (lies) even though meanwhile Sharon and Caprica were stealing Hera back from the Basestar and sailing back to Galactica without so much as a "the fuck you are." Then Caprica went to the brig, of course, and then there was not-actually-previously bunkum about Gaius demanding due process, and we're going to get there. Just not anytime soon. Finally, "previously," Cally went "Honk honk honk," and Chief went, "Because!"

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What we'll never know is this: because of Helo's near-psychotic inability to fucking grow up and serve the Fleet, as is his mandate, he's being given shit jobs in the hope that he will give in and stop acting like such a fucking pansy, or I guess quit altogether and Helo's like, "You have only lightly brushed the petals of my pansiness with the tips of your military fingers, such is my ability and needless motivation to protest you." And the mysterious reason for all of this is that there's no moral center to this story, because we're in spec script fakeout land, and I guess Ronald Moore sometimes just doesn't care. So this week -- and I guess quote "previously" -- Helo's in charge of dealing with the unhoused from the Second Exodus, and we didn't know that because last time we were in the tents, which was Kacey time, Dualla was in charge here. And it's called Dogville in this episode, previously but not really. Frankly, I prefer the other name, whatever it was. So the Thera Sita docks up tight, and included in those refugees are 51 Sagittarons, which makes Tigh go "Oh, boy..." and even Adama worries about how Helo's going to deal with this, because Sagittarons are hated for some reason.

Here's what I know about Sagittarons: Zarek was in jail for terrorism on their behalf [when we first met him](#), and Dualla is one. My understanding from that previous episode was that they were like Ireland: exploited by the other 11 Colonies for cash and labor, and therefore looked down upon, in a feedback loop of oppression. Zarek went from a martyr to their official representative in the Quorum, I think, and now he's the Veep.



And while it would have been interesting to follow that storyline, which I don't think I imagined, we've decided to go a different route here, because what worked on -- gosh, every other goddamned sci-fi show I can remember -- should totally work here, right? This isn't a show about the ethics of politics in the microcosm of violently reduced population, is it? It's just another shitty sci-fi show? Oh, okay then: we'll do that same shitty story about the people who don't believe in medicine and how sometimes you have to let people make their own decisions about things. Sounds great! I loved that plot on every Star Trek show, twice on Sundays, and I loved it on Babylon 5, where it was actually good, too! Can we put some spin on that or make it interesting or unexpected in any way? Not without making no goddamn sense at all. Oh, great! I love basic plot holes that have no reason for existing!

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But Jacob, you're saying: why create bitching? I mean, it's just a TV show. Surely not every episode can be a home run, right? And my response would be: Why the fuck not? When did we get to the point where excellence gets graded on a curve? Why give yourself, the show, anything that pass? I am so violently opposed to this concept of "everybody screws up now and then," it's not even funny. What a nasty, masturbatory, self-aggrandizing, lazy, stupid sentiment. I'd rather not have the conversation at all, if that's the only option, because at that point you're defending the indefensible: I like the show enough to lie and say this wasn't that bad. Who does that help? How does that induce transformation? How can you rise, when you give yourself the option of taking a nap? You fuck up, you learn, you try harder, you get better, you get stronger. You don't lay down and go to sleep and close your eyes and shut down the conversation: you evolve. This episode couldn't be worse, but it could be a great fucking deal better: Why isn't it?

Here's a reason: Helo tosses and turns, in bed, unable to sleep, full of strange sensations. The main one is that his skin is being hollowed out from the inside by a mysterious party -- let's just call him Michael Angeli -- for the purposes of putting on his gigantic awesome body like a skin suit, and walking around inside

a world not unlike the world of Battlestar we've come to know. This Helo Suit looks like Helo, wants to hug you like Helo, is silently grim and put upon like Helo, and takes off its clothes a good deal more than Helo normally does, which is nice of the Helo Suit; but the most interesting thing about the Helo Suit is its curious power of turning everybody around it into a total asshole, acting entirely out of character and speaking in stilted language, in order to bring the Helo Suit closer and closer to sainthood. That's a weird power for a skin suit to have, don't you think? I guess it all depends on who's wearing it. I guess that's what we've gotta figure out. Now, I don't know anything about Michael Angeli, if by "know" you mean "base my perceptions and opinions on verifiable fact and personal experience." But if you think for one hot second that you can't learn a lot about a person from the stories they tell, you need to go back to People School.

We've talked about him before: he wrote "[Six Degrees Of Separation](#)" and "[A Measure Of Salvation](#)". The first one's important because of the weird S&M shit with Shelly Godfrey, and the second one because of how the Helo Suit made its first appearance in it. Same basic premise: a primary-colors ethical dilemma in which only the Helo Suit makes any sense and everybody else is a bloodthirsty werewolf version of their usual self, and the ethical dilemma is solved by a primary-colors ethically dubious action by the Helo Suit, and then Daddy Adama pats Helo on the head. I admit I wasn't this offended by "Salvation," mostly because I agreed with the slant of the story itself, because I am a biased toasterfracking freak. He ghostwrote Chyna's biography. The lady wrestler. Lady. Wrestler. The title of this episode is "The Woman King." The title of his next episode is "The Son Also Rises," which is stupid in its own right, but in context of this paragraph is really sad and a little creepy. The stories we tell are pieces of our hearts you can look at: put on the Helo Suit and walk around in it, feel what it's like to be unjustly blocked at every turn, a "lone voice" in the wilderness, the only person that can see the truth, the only person who's good inside in a world gone bad, whose Korean laundry-folding wife sits at home waiting for him with a baby in her arms, and whose selfishness is just one more thing the Helo Suit has to deal with, the women constantly pushing and pulling and occasionally spanking him but lacking basic humanity, the women who disappear when you're not around, the women who when they do

appear are so hopelessly unevolved they're climbing down your throat, in your day-to-day life of being perfect, in a secret way that nobody really understands.

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Helo shirtlessly worries over his paperwork, his new responsibility as the Mayor of Dogville, sits on the sofa, finally falls asleep. Sharon, holding Hera, finds him sleeping there and looks down at him adoringly, worried about how hard he's pushing himself, and how selfless and amazing he is, and how she'll never understand what would make a person so incredibly virtuous, given what a selfish shrew she is. We fade to the corridor, next morning, where he doesn't even hear Sharon asking him about the rough night, such is the heaviness of the burden on his brow, and he says he had a "stupid dream," and Sharon worries -- Dogville's population is about to increase by 300. "I don't know where I'm gonna put them, but it's not like I'm walking around taking my own pulse." Maybe you should, Helo. You seem to have an emotionally retarded solipsist operating your joints from within. He slaps her ass at the corridor junction, cutely, and the Pilots come running up from another direction, Lee and Kara and Racetrack, and they all fall in together. The good thing about this unendingly shitty script is that the actors are just as good as ever, even with what they have to work with, so it's not as horrible in action as it is on paper, but they shouldn't have to work this hard. Dee and Cottle don't even try, honestly. Racetrack cracks Kara up with her request of Helo for a sex cubicle to which she wishes to take a "ripped and ready nugget" that she wants to "break in, you know, just right." Any other writer I'd probably laugh, and feel a little sorry for Racetrack, but God knows what the Helo suit thinks about all this. Maggie says, "Thank God he didn't get his hands on Starbuck in this episode"; Jacob says, "Like that would even fucking occur to him." Everybody heads off on CAP, Helo and Sharon kiss and are adorable.

Helo murmurs comfortingly to the refugees, an unending monologue of kindness and civil service. An attractive young Sagittaron, named Buckminster, speaks up about how he wants to stay with his people, and Tigh steps on Helo's authority, telling Buckminster to shut it. Buckminster helps his elderly father

through the queue, and Helo reminds the Colonel that he's got the situation under control. "Yeah, sure you do," says Tigh, because he has a history of not recognizing the authority of skin suits like Helo and Kara. Across the hangar bay that is Dogville, in triage, a Dr. Robert is introducing us to the other of the two patient stories we're tracking this week: Willie King. His mother waves Robert off, telling him they're fine, and Robert surreptitiously waves Dualla over, to persuade Mrs. King to accept his care. "We're Sagittaron," says the woman King. "We don't believe in medicine." Dualla assures her it's fine: Robert is a civilian, so he has nothing to do with the military. "We'll respect your traditions," she says. Except I don't think Mrs. King said, "We don't believe in medicine specifically as practiced by military physicians," so already you're disrespecting her traditions. Which is fine, because these are cramped quarters to be going all Christian Scientist on yourself, and that needs to get talked out, because that's the point of the show. Problem is, it never does, because this episode isn't even about what it is about, is how dumb this is. So Dualla's like, "Trust me, I'm a (self-hating) Sagittaron," and this apparently changes Mrs. King's entire belief system, because she lets Robert check the boy out. As he's feeling Willie's lymph nodes, Willie starts reacting poorly to the exam, and he and his mom run away from Dr. Robert, who immediately starts bugging Buckminster's dad. Junior tells him to screw off, and Robert backs away -- then notices how every single person in the hangar is suddenly coughing, sniffing, and looking haggard. As a medical doctor, he is trained to notice giant anvils like this falling on his head from the sky.

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Tigh comes running up about how Robert is a "brain-dead card cheat" who owes him a drink, and Robert intensely tells him to get the hell out of Epidemic Dogville; just as Tigh's wowing at the rudeness, Helo comes running up, and he and Robert confer on how all of the people are suddenly sick all of a sudden. Across the room, Willie King goes down, and Dualla shouts for the doctor; Mrs. King is still protesting all this, and Robert once again sends Tigh out of there. This time, he goes. Dualla and Robert rush Willie off to the makeshift med camp, and Helo stares around at all the people coughing and being sick and looking haggard. As a

mayor of refugees, he is trained to notice these kinds of patterns.

"So? What have we got here, Mike?" I hope it has a shitty, stupid sci-fi name when a real disease that didn't sound like an Anne McCaffrey planet would work just as well.... Bingo! "Mellorak sickness. It originates in the kidneys and then rapidly attacks the respiratory and the immune system." Doc Cottle -- who, by the way, is phoning it in the entire time, as well as being saddled with some embarrassing and impossible dialogue, explains how if they don't get treated within 48 hours, they'll die. It's not airborne -- it spreads through human contact: "Saliva, sexual intercourse, through the skin." If you think any of those things matter, they don't. There's no big revelation or twist depending on that. It's just talking. Talking talking talking. "Right now it seems confined to the Sagittarons," the doctors say, and Tigh intrigues the Helo Suit by talking about how that's a good thing: "They're welcome to it." There's gotta be a better character than Tigh for this role in the story, considering how much he already gave for the Fleet. I mean, I get that there are other kinds of racism than Cylon hating -- that's the best thing this episode does, is make Robert act cool to Sharon and Hera -- but Tigh makes this a weird fit. Anyway, the disease is spreading, but it's curable with "a shot of bitamucin" and some sedatives for the vague "symptoms," which makes no sense but is a retrofit for later on in the episode when Dualla gets crammed into the Maiden In Distress role that so clearly doesn't fit her that you've gotta dope her up. There's not a huge amount of bitamucin in the Fleet, so Cottle suggests that they wait to inoculate until people start presenting symptoms. Adama reminds us all that Robert is the civilian doctor, and puts the whole thing in his hands -- requesting only that Chief and the crew get immunized. "I don't need any downtime," he says, and I can only refer him to this entire goddamned episode.

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"If we disinfect everything and stress hygiene," says Cottle, which somebody has said in all three Angeli scripts, so add "germophobe" to the list of neuroses, "Some people won't get sick. And, uh, they won't need the medicine." If you think that's self-evident -- that people who aren't sick don't need medicine, or that if you don't give people medicine you still have the medicine

you didn't give them, logical tautologies like that -- I must advise that you keep reading. Helo gets all Mayor of Dogville about throwing the Sagittarons into showers and making announcements about how they are filthy, but Robert wants the Sagittarons to himself: "We don't want to single them out anymore than we already have to. We'll have a riot on our hands." Jeez, I wish. Cottle cracks a joke about how they "won't have to worry about having enough medicine for the Sagittarons," right, because Sagittarons don't believe in medicine, and Adama reiterates this salient fact: "Most of them are gonna refuse it. People are gonna die." Robert makes this weird, kind of chinny-chin-chin face that he makes throughout the episode and in the X-Men movie (where he played a confusingly motivated racist murderer who eventually turned into an aspic, which he does not do in the episode, not even in the deleted scene, not at all): kind of proud, kind of like he's taking a dare, kind of like he's daring you to hassle him. And in the case of Sagittarons dying, all three. Cottle bitches -- and he at least makes sense right here, because being a doctor is his entire personality -- that to them, over the last 3000 years, "medicine's been just the great curse." Tigh explains that this is because they're a bunch of "stubborn, root-sucking jackasses holding onto traditions that are a thousand years old." Which is awkward on the heels of the last line, but not as awkward as the Helo Suit getting its Resolved Face on and making a little black mark next to Tigh's name in its Big Book Of Overbearing Moral Judgments.

Over in Dogville Triage, the Sagittarons are praying and burning herbs and wiggling out; Buckminster gives his father some tea. "Stink enough for you in here?" asks Robert, and Helo subtly implies that he's being ungracious: "Yeah, it's a really potent smell." It's burdock root, Robert explains: "Sagittarons use it as a calmative." Robert laughs when Helo asks if it works. "Hell, I don't know. They're all gonna die anyway." Helo Suit is not pleased by this, of course, and nods even as he's making another little mark next to Robert's name. Soon he'll be all alone with his virtue, and then I don't know what will happen.

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On Colonial One, Zarek's begging Roslin not to hold a trial for



Gaius Baltar. Because all women fall into two categories, Mean Mommy and Stupid Slut -- and since Roslin's too old to be a Stupid Slut, she gets to be a Mean Mommy -- Roslin is completely obnoxious and rude to him, in a patronizing singsong: "Gaius Baltar will be tried for high crimes and treason. A tribunal of judges will hear the evidence against him, a verdict will be read, he will be found guilty. And he will be finally held responsible for his actions. If you can summon up a little patience, as I have done, we will get through this ordeal." Zarek manages not to summon up a little slapping, which I would find difficult, and delivers a speech that is even longer and less musical: "Listen to me. Baltar will get his trial, and this is what you'll get: A hurricane. The media will descend on you and watch and scrutinize and question your every move. You will have sectarian violence. You will have assassination attempts. You will have civil unrest on a scale we've never seen. Work, labor, everyday routine in this Fleet will come to a complete halt. This trial is going to bring the entire Fleet down." I wish the President were a man, don't you? You'd never have to explain basic shit to her if she were a man.

Mean Mommy Tory explains that they have a security plan in order "which includes rapid Marine deployment, increased CAP operations, security details..." Zarek talks over her, because girls shouldn't speak unless spoken to, without even sparing her a glance: "-- A hurricane, Laura. If I were you, I'd declare martial law during the trial. You're gonna need a lot more than a little patience to survive." He shrugs; he's done all he can. The Zarek Suit leaves with a final virtuous "I'm here if you need me," and goes off, I assume to be anywhere but involved in the Sagittaron storyline, which until I guess today was his whole reason for existing, but no longer concerns him. Tory snorts the following stupid line of dialogue: "Your best friend, your worst enemy," and Roslin muses, making a thinky face: "I've never seen him like that. He was truly frightened." And if anything, that proves him right, because the Zarek Suit is never cowardly unless it's really important that you disbelieve him in order to prove him right, because of his manly discretion and that unflinching demeanor and scent of Old Spice that says he's swinging massive pipe, and because he's special in a secret way nobody understands.

In Helo's office in Dogville, there's a line out to here; some guy is yelling at the Suit about how the rest of the refugees want the Sagittarons outta there. Helo asks where the hell he's supposed to send them, and the man doesn't have an answer, because by questioning Helo Suit, he's already proven he's an idiot who doesn't get it. Mrs. King comes in next, and Helo tries to put a lid on his pissiness (this is Penikett's second-best scene), asking her what she needs. "My son is dead," she says. I don't think he remembers her from the teaser, but he definitely recognizes the "soma braid" in her hands, which -- get this shit right here -- is believed to bring good health. Soma. Health. Whatever. "Look, I'm sorry. It's not enough. If you don't treat the disease, it's fatal, okay? This didn't have to happen!" Mrs. King randomly suggests that her son was killed, and Helo Suit gets smug, but just for a tiny second: "No, ma'am, he died. Okay? He died because he needed real medicine." She randomly suggests that he died because she made a mistake. And I don't think she's talking like this for any goddamn reason other than to prolong the mystery and make it seem like Helo's figuring something out so you go "ohhhh" in a second, because the only thing I'd figure out from some old lady talking to me like this is that sometimes, talking to old ladies is uncomfortable, because sometimes they are unnecessarily vague for narrative purposes, and it makes them both irritating and poorly written. Helo's like, "Awesome! Yes! It's your fault that your son died! Great! You get it! Go tell the other Sagittarons that if they die, it's their own fault too!" She shakes her head like she's frustrated that he didn't decipher her nonsense: "I will. I will tell them not to trust him. They warned me about him, but I wouldn't listen. I didn't want my son to die. I took a chance. I went to Dr. Robert. I let the doctor give the medicine to Willie." Whatever, whatever, whatever. Helo says she waited too long, but she protests that he'd only been sick for 12 hours. "He was 19. He is dead. That doctor killed my son." She leaves, crying, and the Helo Suit stares after her, and makes another mark next to Robert's name.

"We lost another one last night," Robert says, and Helo nods: Willie King. "No, a three-year-old girl whose parents refused to let me treat her. Willie King's mother lost Willie King. It's a shame, he was a goner. You saw him when he was in here. He was at least three days symptomatic." Helo wonders if he explained it, and

Robert gets the one witty line of the entire episode: "What the hell am I supposed to say to her? Sorry, ma'am, but if you would've just turned the corner a little sooner on your superstitious crap, we could've saved your son." He then instructs Helo to strip off, proving he's not all bad, and Helo -- as though people aren't constantly asking him to take his shirt off -- goes, "Excuse me?" Like he's going to have to add "tried to make out with me" to his list. But wait, Dr. Robert is a doctor and he's holding a needle and they are in a makeshift medical facility, during an epidemic, so just maybe he's going to give you a shot. Which is in fact what happens, even though they're rationing, because of everybody in the entire Fleet who needs to get vaccinated against this thing, DUH, it's Helo, and Robert actually has to explain to him how that works. As he gives Helo the shot, Robert mentions by the way that he told Tigh about how great Helo is. Which would be nicer to hear if we knew about the whole "give Helo the crappy duties" part of this story, but we don't.

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Later in Joe's Bar, more of that crappy bar music is playing. Lee calls Racetrack "Hands of Stone," and Connor calls her "Marge," and I don't know which I like less. Helo comes in and Starbuck "quips" about "here comes Mellorak man," and Gaeta's smoking a cigarette without putting it through Connor's face, which I guess shows improvement from last week's neck-stabbing behavior, and they talk about the Sagittarons, and Chief randomly addresses the Helo Suit and the room at large: "Yeah, well, you'll get no tears from me. It's bad enough my gang's gotta sweat through their stench. I have a feeling one of these days we're gonna wake up in the morning, I'm gonna be really pissed 'cause we're out of meds, 'cause those frackoids saw the light and now we gotta share." Lee waits until this entire speech is over before "interrupting" and telling Chief to throw the ball at the thing, which is what they're doing the whole time, because the only thing Michael Angeli sucks at more than life is writing convincing downtime. Lee's wife is Sagittaron, see. Chief sits down and points out how "none of those religious freaks lifted a finger on New Caprica against the Cylons," and Lee again tells him to shut up, and again he doesn't, relating how "a lot of good Resistance people lost their lives," and finally Lee just tells him to shut up,

and Chief brightly apologizes to Dualla, who blows it off because she hates them more than anybody. And MAN do I not like having the black girl on the cast tacitly approving the racism against her own people, based on the fact that they're "pigheaded and argumentative," and thus writing the rest of the cast a pass for their prejudices, which she shares at the same time that they don't apply to her. She keeps ranting about how "Medicine's an abomination, it's a sin against the Gods. Physicians are reading disease, because they refuse to acknowledge that the body and the mind are myths," and Lee kisses her and informs her that "this body's no myth," and she giggles, and everybody tries not to fucking barf, and Kara rolls her eyes, and whatever. Stupid. Dualla says -- in preparation for the final act -- that if she gets sick, she's going to Robert, not Cottle, who she suddenly hates. And then she offers a "witticism" about how the "nearsighted bastard may as well use a spike instead of a needle," and everybody fake-laughs politely because Dualla made a funny and this is the part where we laugh, I guess. Except it's like the script said, "Then Dualla makes an uproarious joke about Cottle and everybody laughs," but when it was time to actually make up the joke, nobody had anything to run with.

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Sharon's visiting Caprica's cell. Which would be interesting, except it's not about them as women, because women are stupid and have no interior life. It exists for completely separate reasons, including the reintroduction of Chip Gaius, last seen in ["Downloaded."](#) Sharon asks how she's being treated, and Caprica says well enough, although hilariously, she says, "Take a while to get to the point though, don't they?" Heh. That's funny. Sharon thanks Caprica for helping her re-kidnap the thrice-kidnapped Hera, but admits she doesn't really get why. Cue Chip Gaius: "Exactly." Caprica gets nervous, as one does when the hallucinations start in the middle of your conversation, and he asks outright: "What are we doing here? How could you possibly throw yourself on the mercy of these people?" Sharon tells Caprica her best chance of survival is to work with Roslin and the others, specifically to help them expose Baltar for his crimes, and Caprica looks down. Sharon takes off for CAP, promising to get Caprica some clothes. How weird would she look in those?

Caprica thanks her for visiting as we cut to the Brig Observation Room, where Tory and Roslin are watching them talk. "To have some company...thank you." Sharon nods: "Yeah. I care about you."

Back in the cell, that backwards Chip music starts playing, and Gaius, looking all great, asks if she honestly thinks any of them care about her. "I imagine they don't," she admits. I do! I love you, Caprica Six! "So what are you doing here again?" She's like, I actually don't even know. "So you're here to save him, are you?" Maybe. "You are here because you want to be human." She choke-laughes, with tears of shame in her eyes. That's too big to think about; too big to look at. If Gaius's desire to be Cylon was his guilt talking, Caprica's desire to be human is the same. That makes me sad. I want to see her fighting. "But there's a trick to being a human: you have to think only about yourself," he says, and they start making out. Human psychology is all about projection, no? But more than that: if becoming more Cylon means hard logic, hive mind, the desire for individuality in an ocean of minds, then becoming more human means withdrawal from the hive, means independence and staking out the space of ground on which you're standing. Separation from the "we," and understanding the "I." What Real Gaius taught Caprica, and Three, and what took them both off the board, and what scares a thousand Cavils to death every time he thinks of it: to be more than they were supposed to be.

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I'm calling it: Chip Six and Chip Gaius are the same entity, and that entity is an angel of God. Caprica and Gaius (and Kara, and Three; and Cavil and William Adama; and Roslin and Felix Gaeta) are just the tools, pivots, chits it's moving around, in order to break down the Fleet and the Cylons and bring back together what's been torn apart. The angel was born in nuclear fire, in the first Exodus, in the billion burned and orphaned children of Gaius Baltar, in the rebellion and confusion and monstrous destruction the Cylons brought, and the day the Chips stop talking is the day that horror is undone. That's the day we rest, and that's the day all pawns become queens, and that's the day we win. That's Three, looking at the Final Five and seeing Kara's gods and

goddesses; that's Sharon, skipping back and forth across the line, becoming a new woman every single time they put her in these horrible situations. Angel or demon, figment or whatever: this is how the world changes, every single day. This is how things become better. Everything that rises, every single thing, converges in heaven. You change the world by changing yourself, and you change yourself by stepping across the lines, as the angel begs you to do. That line of salt is human and Cylon history and tears, and nothing changes until we step across and hold each other. We erase that line with love and mercy and faith, until it never existed: that salt is the tears of a million children, caught in an hallucination that we're different from each other. The lie that you're alone. Become more Cylon or become more human, all the angel needs from you is this: to become more. To rise.

Roslin and Tory watch Caprica making out with the angel, heads cocked cutely. "...Okay. What do you think she's doing now?" Heh. They stare some more; Laura thinks. "Like she's talking to something or someone. I don't know. I've seen her do it before." And not just her, you've seen this behavior before. Put this together with me. Or don't: the truth would only scare you.

Down in Dogville, there's a riot of people grabbing at Robert; Buckminster screaming that he's killing them. Buckminster orders his countrymen to lynch Robert, and they surge forward; the Helo Suit jumps into the mix and pushes them back, a horde of Marines at his side. "He killed my father!" shouts Buckminster; Robert scoffs at his ignorance. Buckminster whimpers in his rage and grief, but gives in.

Helo grills Robert about Buckminster Senior, noting that the father and son are fundamentalists: "What made them change their minds about getting immunized?" Nothing, of course. Mrs. King is the one who gave in, who went against her faith to save her son; Buckminster's the other side of the coin, who didn't. Robert admits he administered the bitamucin on his own, with that proud face. "Look, it was the middle of the night. I was doing my rounds, and the old man was screaming in pain. I mean, what was I supposed to do?" Helo admits he's confused: aren't they rationing? Buckminster Senior was sick well over 48 hours, and thus a loss. Robert finally admits that Buckminster was marginal, but then tosses his clipboard around and yells at Helo for awhile



about how he's not apologizing for doing his job, and how there are two Picons starting to present symptoms that he needs to treat, and runs off. Helo Suit looks at his Big Book of Judgments and realizes Robert is officially in the Not Virtuous category, at this point.

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"The doctor's version of when he administered the drug greatly differed from that of Mrs. King," Helo tells Adama, in the Admiral's office. Cottle and Tigh are in attendance. "The woman, King," Helo prompts Adama to remember. "Her son started showing symptoms, she immediately took him to Robert for treatment. The boy still died. In the other case, Robert treated a Sagittaron without the man's consent." So the mystery, then, lost in all the static, is why these two patients, with opposite courses of care, both died under Robert's care. Cottle speaks up for treating the people against their will in order to save the Fleet from the epidemic, noting once again that the only reason they haven't done so is the attempt to respect Sagittaron custom. Which the Buckminster treatment did not do, Helo points out, and then he worries about how people are dying from Robert's treatment. "People die under my care every day, it goes with the damn job," Cottle grits out, and Helo reacts poorly: "Killing doesn't." Tigh wigs out on him for accusing Robert of killing people, and Helo backs up a step: "Even if I'm wrong, even if he isn't treating some of these people unethically, I'm concerned he's created a situation down there. It's bad." Adama delivers a really long, really pointless speech: "Captain. I have the former President of the Colonies sitting in a prison cell, and a Cylon woman is in custody, and a population that would love nothing more than to tear both of them apart. My ship is overcrowded, and I have an epidemic on my hands. Now the question is: are you capable of doing your job? And are you going to stop making these unfounded accusations? Are you?" Helo gives in and leaves; Tigh cuts sneaky eyes at the door.

In the corridor, Helo's grumbling and cursing under his breath, and Tigh comes running up to him for round two. "With all due respect, sir, I think Micah Robert might be hurting people," Helo says pissily, and Tigh mentions how Robert's the only one who

even likes Helo anymore. "You may as well take whatever credibility you have left and chuck it out an airlock. You seriously want to stand up for these crazy frackin' people? What is it with you? You just like being on the outside looking in, do you?" Helo notes that this line makes no sense in context, and thus is one in a series of anti-Sharon swipes, and Tigh grins a little about that. "Mike Robert is a stand-up guy. A Caprican, one of our own. A man I can trust. On New Caprica, he worked with the Resistance. He patched up my eye. He fought the enemy. While you were snuggled up in bed with your Cylon wife every night ..." Helo punches him in the gut, even though he didn't say anything that horrible, and Tigh waves off the concerned Marines rushing up. "So you do give a frack what your friends think. Good for you! That's how it should be. But you know what? I give a frack too. About friends, about loyalty. You keep soiling Mike Robert's good name, and we are gonna finish this. How's that sound to you?" Helo just shakes his head, sad to be here, and Tigh advises him to get his hand looked at. Heh.

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Helo wanders through the refugees, begging just 15 minutes to go do something, I don't know what, and catches Mrs. King's eye -- past her, running down the stairs, is Sharon, bearing tidings that Hera is sick. Not the sick she was before, but sick from like the sickness. Helo wonders how he didn't hear about this, and Sharon tells him they took her to Dr. Robert. Helo Suit grabs her and runs, because Robert kills people. In triage, Hera's fussing and sounds pretty sick; Helo balks as Robert prepares her injection of bitamucin, because Helo doesn't know that this is like only the second injection of actual bitamucin -- and not liquid death -- he's administered. Sharon tells him to stop being a baby, and they give her the shot. He's very kind with Hera and Sharon, giving her a bit of sedative for the "symptoms," and giving really great bedside manner. Sharon's the very picture of a concerned mommy, grateful to Robert not only for the treatment but for treating her and her baby so kindly, because when you're Sharon, every smile counts a lot more than we think. "And she'll be okay, though?" He smiles indulgently. "And she'll be fine. You can take her home." They wave goodbye, he chuckles like an awesome doctor, and once they're gone he hands Helo Willie King's soma

braid. "She'll be fine," he says about Hera, somewhat calming Helo down, and then asks Helo to take the braid back to Mrs. King. He makes that weird dare face again, and Helo accepts the mission.

In Dogville Proper, Mrs. King spots him and comes forward, but stays back when she notices the braid. He hands it to her, and she is very beautiful, this woman. "He gave you this. Huh." Helo nods; she asks after Hera, and turns to leave. "Mrs. King, please. I need to ask you something. If you thought Dr. Robert was dangerous, why let him treat your son? I mean, you said you were warned..." She tells him she honestly couldn't believe anybody would carry around that much hate inside, and Helo pushes, and she gets bored with the conversation, because it seems like he's still blaming her somehow and not trying to figure out the mystery. The Helo Suit even turns grieving moms into tiny little assholes. She keeps his gaze as he apologizes once again, and takes off. Mrs. King holds the braid and worries like a zombie.

In the wonderful Agathon quarters, there are baby blankets on the floor and a cute Viper mobile hanging over the crib. Sharon, folding laundry -- don't give Park props like this, she gets too into the business to the point that the laundry is like a third character in the scene; also, don't give the wife laundry, it's stupid -- notes that Helo's a bit angry. "I'm not, I'm just... Work." Sharon tells him it's okay to hate the Mayor job, even to admit that he hates it, and Helo whines. "It's not the job! I know the job sucks, I don't need to be reminded of it!" Um, rude? Sharon counts to three and tries again. "Then what is it?" He doesn't answer the question, just snarls words. "It's hard to not see it," he says, beginning to pace all over the baby's blankets on the floor. "See what? Talk to me, Karl." He complains about how he always ends up on the wrong side of everything. Which is not precisely true: other than marrying a Cylon that even Adama considers family, he only ends up on the wrong side of everything when Michael Angeli puts on his Helo Suit. "You know, maybe Tigh's right. Maybe I want it that way." As though that were a convincing emotional theory for any character ever. Sharon makes a little bit of an ouch face, because nobody likes to be called a symptom of aversive pathology. "What if I'm flying a desk not because I'm good at it, not because I'm right guy for the job, but because it's the right punishment for the guy who crosses the line, and everybody knows it? Maybe I

belong in Dogville." The only punishment for crossing the line is having to live on both sides of it. Talk to your motherfracking wife. Sharon goes to town on the laundry, flouncing and fluffing, and nearly takes offense, but decides to drop it -- because she's right to take offense, but she can't say that because of the Helo Suit Effect, which means she has to bite her tongue -- and Helo invites her to speak right up. "It's your job to manage these people, Helo, and you've just got to do it." Word! It's not all about you! There's not a conspiracy among all adults to block your virtue and put your lantern under a bushel or whatever the hell is going on here. They are too busy with their own shit. If you feel like your super-duper awesomeness is getting ignored by the world at large, I'm going to let you in on a secret: you're not that fucking awesome. Helo snits about how whatever, maybe she's right, maybe it's all in his head (IT IS! JEEZ!) and stomps off to be righteous somewhere else. Sharon's like, "The hell are you doing?" and then he leaves, so of course she sits down and stares into space and thinks about how he just kind of showed her some pretty gross stuff about Helo. Then she defeats more laundry.

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Helo sneaks into Cottle's office and there's a scintillating montage of him reading paperwork and patient charts. Cottle comes in and tries to make light of this gross overstep, but Helo starts up yelling about how he can prove that Robert is killing the women of Qumar, and Cottle tells him to take it outside and then shove it up his ass. "No, listen to me! He killed them on New Caprica! Look. Guy goes in for a cough, he dies of heart failure. Here, see for yourself. This one, woman had simple appendicitis, she died on the operating table. Of the Picons he treated, 12% of them died, Capricans -- oh, he likes Capricans -- the mortality rate was 6%. Sagittarons? 90%. Ninety percent of the Sagittarons died while in his care." And just like that, we've gone from a so-so crappy episode about medical ethics to a very crappy story about...serial killers who do things for literally no reason whatsoever. ["I also like the idea that he's letting twice as many Picons die as Capricans, and no one thinks to mention that." -- Joe R] Cottle tells Helo to go to hell some more, and Helo is perfect some more, and whatever. There's a really good line reading from Helo here: "Please, can you do an autopsy on Mrs. King's

son, to see how he died? I'll let it go, I will, I promise, I will let it go. Just check?" That was the best acting in the episode, that line. I loved it. Cottle lies and says that he checked into Willie, and that he had both Mellorak sickness and bitamucin in his system, which deflates the Helo Suit. Cottle throws him out for real and lights a crotchety old cigarette. The total lack of commitment of the actor playing Cottle in this episode is...AWESOME.

In Dogville triage, to the sound of Sagittarons praying, Dualla comes stumbling up, looking like hell. I heard this was originally supposed to be Racetrack, but I guess Dualla gets more central due to being a self-hating Sagittaron. Whatever, it would be a woman in this role, of course, and since all the women on the show this week are being written in the same way, I guess it doesn't matter. Michael Angeli's ex-wife climbs inside the Dualla Suit and asks Dr. Robert for some bitamucin; Mrs. King watches at an angle such that all we see is Robert's creepy hand readying the injection, Mrs. King staring, Mrs. King remembering how Dee's Sagittaron from her speech earlier, which made no sense and didn't move the plot along at the time, but only existed to remind us that Dee is Sagittaron in a place where Mrs. King could hear it.

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Mrs. King somehow gets into the crew's quarters and knocks hella loud on the door of the Agathon home, waking up all three of them. Helo gets dressed -- aww -- and grabs his gun; Sharon tends to the baby. Mrs. King informs Helo about Dualla, again in the most ass-backward and unclear possible way of getting this info across: "Your friend, the soldier. Dualla. She's sick. She went to the doctor. She went to the doctor to... no, you listen to me. We lost two more tonight: Sagittarons, who let that murderer treat them. You have to do something." Sharon asks what the hell King's doing there, just as the Marines arrive to cart her off. "Frackin' refugees. I don't know how she snuck through. Morning, sir." I love the hate everybody has for civilians on this show, it's so hilarious and true to life. The Cally Tyrol inside the Sharon Suit goes "Whatevs" and heads back to sleep, but that won't do for the Helo Suit. He starts getting dressed, and Sharon's like, "Don't even think it." Mrs. King lies, when she cries! Helo's like, "It's Dualla, dude," and Sharon totally scoffs. "She has a husband."

Who is flying CAP, Helo notes, but Sharon's not convinced. "She'll take her meds, she'll be fine." Sharon makes the Mean Girl Boomer eyes at him and lets him in on the hideous rumors about Helo and the Sagittarons, how he "might actually be listening to them." My GOD with the Helo Suit right now. Who is this lady pretending to be Sharon Agathon? Helo points out that "listening to the Sagittarons" is right now his entire job, which she knew like four hours ago, and Sharon underlines how they're dying due to not taking medicine even though they are sick. The Helo Suit grows to twice its normal size; people in quarters five floors away start thinking about shitty stuff they can do to make Helo look even more awesome and put-upon.

"You want me to look the other way, is that it? Is that it? Our daughter's fine, that's all that matters?" Um, no? Even in the logic of this stupid story that's stupid. The reason everybody is against you, Helo, is not because they are horrible, but because what you are saying is CRAZY, and the reason for that is because this episode is STUPID. I mean, there's a whole blinders thing here about how if it weren't Sagittarons maybe people would be more willing to listen, and how if he weren't in the doghouse for killing those Prisoners Of War that Bill and Laura were about to use as bioweapons, which is also stupid because Angeli's the only person still following that narrative thread, so it's like there's a secret BSG that only he's watching, when the real reality is that more recently than his stupid episode, Helo SHOT HIS WIFE AND KILLED HER, which frankly trumps "my job sucks and I am a virtuous martyr" as a reason for tension in the Agathon home right now. She tells him that's stupid, and he gets just vicious: "Or is it because as long as everyone hates the Sagittarons they'll forget you're a Cylon for five minutes?" Sharon stands up so fast you'd think she was a robot, and tells him quote to "shut the frack up." "Yeah, I want you to look the other way. I have to fight every single day on this ship to be accepted..." which again: only pisses her off in Angeli episodes. Do you see what I'm saying here? Helo bitches about how this has nothing to do with her, except for how his horrible attitude is pointing right at her, and turns it around to how it's all about him, which is also not true at all. "You think that's who I am? That's what I've become, that's my defining characteristic? The guy married to a Cylon?" Wow, did that come out of nowhere or what? I hate this episode so much. This is like trying to walk around if you only had bones and



no connective tissue. People yelling shit like this, for an entire hour. He grabs his gun and I swear to you he says, "This guy's dirty. I think he's a liar, and I think he's killing people because he's a racist son of a bitch." In case you weren't paying attention.

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Frankly it would have been funnier if the whole episode were this lunkheaded. Like you could have Laura screaming at Zarek, "I feel personally responsible for the Occupation due to my crisis of conscience w/r/t to Gaius's winning the election, so I took it out on him for awhile, but I realized that I was being an asshole, so I'm trying to play Caprica against him without fracturing my tenuous personal ethical boundaries!" Or you could have Lee Adama go, "It's not that I don't love my wife, it's that I am star-crossed with a doomed and broken woman-child who hates herself too much to accept the idea of happiness!" Or Caprica could ... oh wait, that totally happened. All the other ones I'm thinking of, actually happen in this episode. Never mind.

Immediate cut to Helo running down the stairs toward triage, screaming at the Fugees to get out of his way, like in every other scene in this entire episode. Somewhere, Cally's running up to somebody with a phone. He searches the med camp and finally finds Dualla, passed out on a gurney, and he checks her pulse, and a thousand crazy-ass Lee/Kara shippers break out party hats, but after the commercial, she's fine. She's drowsy, because sedatives alleviate the "symptoms." Helo grabs her and tries to take her to Cottle for a second opinion, but because she bitched about Cottle for no reason earlier in the episode, now we buy her doped-up noncompliance. "He's got hands of stone," she mumbles, just so you remember that scene at Joe's Bar where she made that stupid joke and her stupid husband made that other stupid joke and everybody looked really uncomfortable when they were supposed to be having fun at the bar and watching Chief's ongoing breakdown happen right out in the open. Robert comes up, of course, and yells, and Helo yells back, and Robert summons Marines, and Dualla fights him weakly. Cut to Tigh and Cottle coming down the corridor toward Dogville with a bunch of Marines. I guess they look glum or scary or hardcore or angry or hateful or something, but like: it's Tigh and Cottle.

Could you even tell?

Robert yells at the Marines he summoned that Helo is "lost" and hurting Dualla, and Helo screams that he poisoned her, but of course we know he didn't, because she's mentioned like six times that she hates Sagittarons as much as he does, or whatever. Robert screams for Tigh, hoping to leverage his sexy mix of racism and misuse of authority to get Helo off his back so he can go back to his creepy death experiments, and Dualla continues to bitch, and Tigh and Cottle are still walking, and you already know everything that's going to happen, because this episode is -- did I mention -- embarrassingly poor in quality, so there's a lot more of Dualla whining and Helo being all King Kong with Marines flying around him like biplanes and Robert screaming about unrelated shit. "I don't know what kind of a crusade you're on, or who you're trying to impress, but it seriously is not working," he says. Which is another really awesome line, because: WORD! Stop killing people for no reason and maybe we could be friends, because you really have a gift for the one-liners.

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As Tigh and Cottle finally get down the longest corridor in existence and enter, Helo screams about how Robert's killing people by injecting them with liquid death, and Tigh comes in and tells everybody to chill. "Saul," says Robert, relieved. "You told me he was a flake, you didn't tell me he was dangerous!" Tigh tells him to shut the frack up and then everybody stands around and stresses out for awhile. Cottle checks Dee -- she's fine, of course -- and Robert's like, the hell? "You don't believe him, do you? He's seriously delusional! Needs help." And Tigh -- I will never forgive him for this -- fully goes, "Yeah, and we should've given it to him." Oh My God, how does that happen? How do you just blatantly go there? Is it a result of not getting hugged enough as a child? What would lead you to construct a narrative so unremittingly bullshitty and then end it with Tigh, the voice of authority -- just because you have major issues with women doesn't mean you get along with men -- being all Adama about it. "We, humanity at large, will now apologize for not seeing how truly special and magical and amazing you really are. Please accept our humble apologies...and this platter of cookies."

Cottle admits that he lied, and didn't actually check Willie's blood until a couple of hours ago. "I was exhausted, and I'll admit the Sagittarons annoy the hell out of me, and I didn't want to go against my colleague...but you were right about the records, Helo. There was no bitamucin in the King boy's body." So that's two. They should just go all Lord Of The Rings and kneel down and call him liege or whatever. Robert protests that Willie died because it was too late for treatment, but Cottle reminds him of what he just said, about checking the body out. "No, he didn't. He died of acute cell destruction. He was injected with a toxic bisphosphonate!" There's a little of the old Cottle spark for a second, which is nice. Robert protests and whatever, Cottle shoots him down about Buckminster Senior as well, and Helo takes a few swipes in there of the "you are a sick frack" type, and Robert is like, "You ought to be on your knees thanking me for saving your daughter's life!" Which is...totally true, which doesn't explain why Helo growls like a jungle cat and jumps for his throat and has to be restrained by Marines. And then Robert "explains" what the fuck "happened" in this "episode," and it's a real "treat."

"Now, you know how painful this disease is at the end. And they don't want our help. Now, why waste time and meds and space on them, when all of those resources could go to those who really deserve it? Who gets the medication when there's not enough to go around -- the Sagittaron who won't even raise a finger to save his own race, or a Viper pilot?"

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He points at Dee, who is not a Viper pilot at all, but let's back up. I said it before, but just in case, I'm pretty sure this is what he just said: "Fuck Sagittarons! They don't use medicine because they're stupid! So we won't waste medicine on them! The medicine that they refuse to take! Because see above re: they don't believe in medicine! Which on them would be wasted! So I must become a serial killer and murder them instead of not giving them the medicine they so urgently do not want!"

Am I wrong here? Is he not actually saying that? Cottle's back to phoning it in: "What the hell happened to 'do no harm,' Doctor," he asks, and Robert yells about how "someone has to make the

tough choices here," which would be the writer of the episode telling you desperately that this all Makes Sense Don't It, but it doesn't, because this episode wasn't about the "tough choices" unless the "choices" include the "choice" to air this piece of crap, which is not a "tough" choice so much as a "shitty" one. "But it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter, because look at them! They're gonna destroy themselves anyway. Look at them, look at them! They're like worms crawling on a hot rock. Remember what you used to say, Saul? Aside from a Cylon, is there anything that you hate more than a Sagittaron?" And just in case you were thinking maybe Tigh was being treated fairly in this episode, he then says the following line: "I'll tell you what I hate, Mike: being wrong." Everybody makes sad faces and whatever, he orders Helo to arrest Micah and take him to the brig, and as they're leaving, two more awful things happen.

The first one is that Dr. Robert flails in Dee's direction and screams about how he didn't harm her, and Helo totally says, "Right, she's one of the good ones."

Let that sink in for a second.

The second one is how everything goes into slow-motion and Helo and Mrs. King, who's randomly there all of a sudden, stare at each other in slow-motion for a million years, because she is avenged.

I hope a third thing doesn't happen!

Cut immediately to a third horrible thing happening: Helo comes into Adama's office and exposit that he's been invited there by Adama, which is self-evident but still engenders the line, "Sir, you wanted to see me?" Adama tells him to sit down, and then says the following words in the following order without even giving you a second to breathe.

"There's hate, and there's allowing hate. Two sides of the same coin, really. We're guilty of both. Somewhere, we got lost. You being the lone voice in the wilderness, we were bound to stay that way for a while. This is my ship. And I owe you an apology."

What part of any of this is okay? Look, I'm not saying you have to hate the episode, or that I think you're stupid if you loved it or even kind of liked it. Not that my opinion should really have anything to do with yours anyway, since you're a grownup. I like plenty of things that are poorly written, it's not a comment on me as a person. Hex is one of my favorite shows and it regularly makes this episode look like it was written by geniuses. But what offends me here is that first of all, I don't watch science fiction shows for this reason: clumsy moral dilemmas that get solved out of nowhere, black-and-white emotional responses, complete disregard for character continuity, sexless two-dimensional cardboard characters nobody could ever actually care about, misogyny both subtle and overt. This show is an exception to my personal rules, because it brings me an outrageous amount of joy almost every week. So when I say that this is a serious drop of the ball, I'm not setting it alongside other crappy sci-fi shows, I'm comparing it first of all to itself, because at the very least sitting down to watch an episode of Battlestar Galactica should fulfill the promise that you'll be seeing an episode of that show. And this was not one. It was an episode of a horrible show that I never would watch and never want to see again. Secondly, it offends me as a writer, because it's shittily written. I don't know which actually bothers me more. I do know that this piece of crap made me like "[Black Market](#)" a lot more, and for that reason alone I despise it.

So anyway, the Helo Suit tells the Adama Suit worn by Michael Angeli's father that it's not necessary, but the Adama Suit assures him that he does have the apology. Then there's a deleted scene where Helo admits that he killed the infected POW's in Angeli's other episode that nobody cares about but him, and Adama's like, "Are you sure you wanna have this conversation?" and Helo says that he does, and then I don't know. They talk about cribbage or something, whatever's boring and simplistic and stupid, they do that. Then back in the real episode that we had to watch on TV, there's stupid music and Helo standing at the desk until Adama looks up, Helo giving a simpering salute, Helo walking to the door, pausing briefly and leaving, and all of a sudden everything smells of [West Wing](#) for a second, and then Helo leaves. The Adama Suit sits down and sighs and thinks about how amazing Helo is, some more, and how he really should have played more baseball with him when he

was younger, and how the cat is in the cradle and/or the silver spoon, and then Helo comes down the hall toward his quarters, and framed in the door, there's Sharon just standing there blankly and accepting his miles and miles of bullshit because vindication somehow works through the transitive property, so even though in their last scene she called him -- and rightly so -- a dickhole, now because Adama and Tigh apologized, she's fine like it never happened, and she's holding the baby like a pieta, like that one awful poster for *Brokeback Mountain* that had family values, and he walks with his back straight in to his wife, because he is a man and this is what men do, and he's just completely right about everything, and she's sorry for being such a bitch, and they kiss, and it is very, very gay. The end. FOREVER.



# LOOKING UP AT THE ADMIRAL

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 15 | Aired on 02.17.2007

*A Day In The Life* - Cally and Chief work their stuff out while in mortal danger; the Circle is finally redeemed; Laura and Bill manage to outdo their kids' proficiency for cock-blocking each other; the trial tiptoes forward another inch or two.

**Recaplet:** The long, boring, pointless back half of another disconnected, once-promising season limps painfully forward, exhausting and embarrassing by turns, holding out the trial of Baltar like it's the fucking second coming when really it seems likely to be just as boring as this episode right here, and yet never arriving there. Just discussing it, unendingly, in the most basic and annoying ways possible. Don't freak out that the show has jumped the shark -- the same thing happened last year, and it doesn't mean we turn our backs on the show. Unless it does, in which case, I bid you a fond au revoir, and wish they'd tried a little harder again this week. It's been 49 days since the Cylons were last seen, and you know what that means: shitty episodes of this show, where everybody either turns on each other for no reason or starts freaking out about backstory that, to put it kindly, seems basically cobbled together from the less interesting thoughts of writers best left in the past. Another week, another bullshit fake-moving manhood cliché: Adama hallucinates his ex-wife Caroline for the entire episode, and she goads him to hook back up with Roslin, then in the last ten minutes Lee reveals that Caroline was an abusive drunk, and that somehow everything is Bill's fault, and that he should have been a better father-slash-husband, and played more catch with Lee when he was a kid, and the little boy blue and/or the man in the moon, and Lee responds that while Bill may have loved Caroline, probably she never loved him. Which is a shitty thing to say, and comes out of nowhere, and has nothing to do with anything. Luckily, Roslin/the writers have finally come up with a point to Lee, and he's going to be the Chairman for the Exploratory Committee on how to have a Trial for Baltar, which at this point isn't going to take place until even yours truly has given up on this show ever having a point again. There's some jiggery-pokery about how much Sense this Makes, despite Lee's complete lack of familiarity with the law and the apparently incompatible legal systems of the Twelve Colonies, it's all totally stupid and

desperate. Then meanwhile, Cally bitches and moans until finally the airlock gives out, and the only way to save her and Chief -- and at this point, who really cares about either of them? -- is to blow them into space and grab them with Athena's Raptor. They do it, and sadly nobody dies, and then next week, Chief goes back into Norma Raye mode, making what, the fifth episode in a row where his actions, motivations, thoughts and feelings show no connection at all to the episodes on either side? I'm so tired right now. Where did the show go?

**Recap:** Previously, Joseph and Evelyn Adama had a son, William. His first wife's name was Caroline, with whom he had two sons, Zak and Lee. The war killed their marriage, and he got furloughed after the war ended, and then he was all alone. Later, his second wife Anne got him back into the Colonial Fleet; he followed up by getting Tigh reinstated later. I don't know what happened to Anne, but Caroline was engaged to be remarried at the time of Galactica's decommissioning, also known as the end of the world. Then Olmos started calling her "Carolanne," creating something of a Crisis On Infinite Ex-Wives which was resolved when they suddenly became one person, even though the timelines don't make sense, because wives get a shitty shake here in S3.5. As long as they're shrieking harridans that abuse their children and/or lovers and husbands, that's good enough. Or...or I guess I can buy Carolanne, no matter the name, because this show is all about recreating your family drama, almost as much as [Grey's Anatomy](#) is: Lee's mother was a violent drunk who forgot to apologize and never lived up to her own measure; Kara's mother was a drill sergeant with weird ideas about duty and discipline; Adama leaves infinite wives and lovers behind in pursuit of legal and military ideals. Humanity's a Fleet made up of orphans: all they have are memories of the dead, twisted by time. It's not that you marry a woman just like your mom, it's that you marry a woman who makes you feel the way mom did, for good or ill. Very different proposition, and way more on your side of the line than hers, either of them. Human psychology is based on projection.

Down on New Caprica, during a party to celebrate the breaking of ground, President Gaius's memorable imprint on yet another world, Laura Roslin stood in the alluvial deposits of a virgin planet and tried to illustrate for her closest friend what a new world

would be like: a world without war and fear and pain, a future that wasn't always rushing toward you, but waiting somewhere on the horizon for you just to walk toward it. I don't know if Bill heard what she was saying, but this was what she was saying: "In the mountains north of here there's this little stream. The water is so clear, it's like looking through glass. I am thinking of building a cabin." She never did. He never got to wash the alluvial deposits off his feet; he never even saw the stream.

Later, on the run again, Chief Galen Tyrol admitted to Lee that he was having trouble with his wife -- their family, for which Bill Adama still feels responsible, started on New Caprica. In some ways it ended there, I guess. They had to start over, and they still hadn't. "Marriages: Why we build bars," Chief said. And Laura lay back on William's bed with her shoes off, and touched his arm tenderly, and discussed matters of political and national importance, and of the most personal importance: how we go on. How we knock the alluvial deposits off our shoes and forget the disappointments and the triumphs of that cursed world, and remember again how we used to do things. How to go back to simply running, after the awful chance to rest.

Now: Bill's younger, in the backyard of a beautiful house on proud Old Caprica; none of that yellow irradiated glow, just wind chimes and birds and a billion birds. He looks out the window, peaceful and strong.

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Now: Bill's a whole lot older, onboard Galactica, speeding away from the Algae Planet and the plague and MKUltra; next to him lies Carolanne, asleep. A private outside buzzes Colonel Tigh inside, and Saul's eyes dart from the empty bed, where Carolanne never was, to Bill's face, and he wishes him a happy anniversary. Bill looks at him through the mirror. Maybe he nods.

Chief breathes a long sigh and climbs up the ladder to the Tyrol quarters, where Nicky's crying eternally. He's carry a bottle he just made and asks Cally to check the temperature, just in case. Sometimes he hurts people without meaning to. Cally congratulates him on an excellently warmed bottle and he grunts, irritated by everything. "Daddy's tired of burning his wrists." He tells her to get ready and she's surprised and not too

happy; they were supposed to spend the day with Nick. Two of the knuckledraggers called in sick and the Tyrols are filling in; Nicky keeps screaming; Chief's headache gets worse. "The fracking daycare workers see more of Nick than we do," she complains, and Chief notes that until they learn to strip a Viper, things have to go this way. He offers to take Nicky to daycare, and Cally snits when he leaves the diaper bag behind, barking after.

Saul expositos that Chief's up to checking the servos in Airlock 12, while Bill thinks of Carolanne; there's nothing else on today's duty roster. "The Fleet's quiet. You could use some time for yourself," Saul says, offering to take the first watch on CIC. "I'll be keeping my schedule. This is just another day," he grunts, and hears Carolanne's voice suddenly, petulant: "Just another day? Maybe I should have married him instead of you." (Except the inflection, for some reason, hits "should" and not "him," like she was torn between them at some point, which muddies the timelines even more. Adama silently snips at her, "I could have sold tickets to that." Saul never would have gone for it. I served with Ellen Tigh, I knew Ellen Tigh, Ellen Tigh was a friend of mine. And Carolanne? You're no Ellen Tigh.) Bill goes back to that gorgeous old house, for a second: looks at their wedding photo. (He looks so much like Hotdog! Heh.) "We had some good times," says Carolanne, over his shoulder. "But more bad." She's dead; this isn't her talking.

"But you keep bringing me back anyway. Just this one day, year after year." Which was where I started to hate the episode, frankly. I'm not at all against it; it's got more patterns and parallels than you can shake a stick at, and some amazing performances if you ignore Carolanne and Cally, but WTF with the voice-over. First of all, it creates a false and clumsy parallel with the Chips, which it shouldn't; secondly, the dialogue is unbelievably silly; thirdly: no voice-overs, please. This isn't a '70s soap opera; there are no giant ice machines (as of yet). In 2007 it's one thing to use it as a framing device, a true thread in the narrative, but it's quite another to use them like thought balloons in a comic book, which is what this is. Olmos is a magic-ass actor: he can carry it without the ridiculous VOs. There are better ways to do this. This show is a behaviorist's wet dream: all of them, but especially Olmos and the pilots, say more when they don't talk. If you don't use that, if in fact you use a device that specifically works against it, with embarrassing expository

dialogue, you're one hand fighting the other, hamstringing the greatest strengths of the show while introducing Gaius-on-acid levels of shameful vocalizations. For what? "But you keep bringing me back anyway. Just this one day, year after year. Only thing I can't understand is...why?" Really? Really, Carolanne? Can't figure that one out? Congratulations, you're as emotionally tone-deaf as the script you're in.

"Neither do I," says Bill, and a young Private enters with Bill's coffee, disturbing him from his reverie; he remembers caressing her face even as the kid's telling him his name. He sends the boy out again. "It's going to be a long day," Carolanne thinks. "It always is," Bill says. Oh, and another thing? Bill's functionally an intuitive, he doesn't operate like this: hallucinations in this much detail, physicality, all that stuff doesn't fly given everything we know of his psychological makeup. Maybe the voice-overs, but they'd all be his voice, and he'd be imagining a million conversations that could have happened, not one conversation about what's going on around him. Whatever, you know what, it's a good story -- two good stories -- with good acting and pretty camera work. I refuse to create bitching this week of all weeks, when even Cally's cute and Seelix is actually likeable.

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Group head, where the deck crew is getting ready for the first shift; Chief informs Cally that Nicky didn't even cry when he dropped him off, then ignores her for a second, pissing her off, while he checks in with Figurski and then calls Seelix and Cally to join him on checking Airlock 12.

Down there, Airlock 12 is a total mess. "Cylons blew the hell out of it. Nobody's been down here since damage control plugged the holes." He calls out to Seelix, who's behind the glass, just like she was when she was murdering collaborators, back when we started airlocking each other, thinking that would shake the dust off. I say this not to get back on the Seelix thing, or God forbid the Cavil thing, but to point out that it had to be pilots -- the ones the deckhands send out to their deaths every day -- that saved Chief and Cally Tyrol for their son, and it had to be Sharon, and it had to be Seelix and Saul, and it had to be Adama: all these people had to be there, to save Chief and Cally Tyrol. It had to be the twins, under Bill's eye, saving the dirty-handed family of the

Fleet, and their own. It had to be Seelix and Saul, from the Circle, to turn Airlock 12 back into a place for life; it had to be Sharon, shedding Boomer for good, to save Chief and Cally. It had to be Adama, to forgive himself for letting them go to New Caprica in the first place, to bring balance back to his declarations of heartlessness back in the ring. In this way, "A Day In The Life" bookends Verheiden's last episode, "Collaborators," a lot more neatly than that crap last week, and it's more satisfying as a result. Separately I always said that "Unfinished Business" was as much about Bill's relationship with Chief than anything else, and this feels like a nice close for that too, alluvially speaking.

Sorry, we're talking about all this stuff up front because the plot hits heavy and hard and it's pretty much like watching dominos at that point. So Seelix and Chief establish that they can talk through the glass; it's beside the point to say you can't touch through glass, but we're not there yet. Seelix looks around for the electrical schematics on the airlock, and discovers "somebody's year-old lunch" in the process; inside the airlock Cally asks after her son, irritating Chief even more. She points out that he could have dragged anybody down there with him, and Chief piffles that she knows the gearing systems best. "What do you want me to do, give you special treatment because you're my wife? How would that look?" Okay, I don't date video game boys very often and this is why: "sit quietly and watch me read this boring comic book or play this boring video game" is in fact not equal to "let's spend time together," no matter how confused you are about this point. Boys, you're not fooling anybody with that shit -- just let us go out and have human fun. You can stay home and make love with your computer all you want; we'll talk to you when we get home, okay, and we promise not to hold it against you. I always knew Chief was a gamer boyfriend, but gah man I hate to see that stuff. Sorry, flashbacks are over now. So Cally finally blows up and ushers him away from the mic so she can explain the episode in a belabored, stilted fashion: "We keep trying to pretend like nothing's changed, that our lives are exactly like they were before we went to New Caprica. But it is different. We're married, we have a son." Looks way cuter this week, still can't act. Chief blows this off as "just a rough patch," and outside, Seelix works and we can hear Cally catching on to how this show works. Finally. "What if rough patches are all we have left?" What if there's no cabin, ever?



Cally complains that they said they were gonna raise Nicky themselves, and Chief counters that they "swore a lot of things," which I don't know, but that "the Cylons didn't exactly cooperate." He starts to work, and something goes nuts; the doors all start to lock themselves, with Cally and Chief inside and Seelix rushing and rushing around. Chief yells at her and she's like, "Dude! I didn't do anything!" Then she does something: observes a pressure differential inside: "Nothing drastic, but you guys are definitely losing air..." Chief nods, and it makes sense: they're in space. Obviously it wouldn't take a huge leak to freak out the spaceship, thus the doors dropping. "I feel safer already," Cally snarks beautifully, and Seelix is like, "...So the hull of the ship's been breached?" He calls this a dramatic term -- more like a rough patch -- and starts looking around for the hole so he can plug it. "One of these patches must have cracked when we came in." Cally -- locating her rage in the most pointless, stupid place as usual -- immediately wants to find the person who built the walls (decades ago) which contain the seals that have now sprung leaks (after four trips through atmosphere, at least one through a star cluster, and three firefights with the Cylons, understand) and "kick their asses." Because clearly their shoddy work ethic is the problem here. Chief's like, "Okay, before that, let's not run out of oxygen, okay?" and starts looking for the leak, because the only problem he can't solve is...obvious. Outside, the leak is scary, but you know what? I'm just so proud of Lee Adama that he's somehow ended up on the outside of this room, because normally wherever air is slowly leaking out of something, there you will find Lee Adama, fighting for breath. Maybe he's growing up. This episode would desperately like you to think so.

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41,398 souls in the Fleet, but 90% of the loss was Sagittaron, so who gives a fuck? Am I right? Adama walks on river stones, back on Old Caprica, looking at his son's toys and thinking about his children. The ones he forgot and the ones he failed, and the ones he can't stop saving. "Leeson takes first watch. Leeson takes first watch. Kinsey checks the roster. Kinsey checks the roster. Jaffee brings me coffee. Jaffee brings me coffee." Carolanne's amused that he's still doing his memory exercises; still jealous of the war. "Do you really think they expect you to know all of their names?" More embarrassing exposition and then: "Now hurry, you're going to be late meeting Laura."

As he walks down the corridor, Carolanne wonders aloud if she, Laura, possibly has a "thing for bad boys": "She wouldn't be the first." I don't know what that has to do with anything, unless he's being "bad" in some way I cannot identify, or there's about to be a return to the whole Laura/Zarek/Bill/Saul thing that always seems poised to take over when New Caprica comes up, which would be hot in certain ways, I guess, if a little too Primal Scene for yours truly. Adama shushes Carolanne, back in the old house for a moment: "She's the President of the Twelve Colonies." Carolanne -- and I don't want to be too hard on the acting, honestly, because she does freak-out really well, but mostly, this dialogue is screaming-meemie bad -- "Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, of course. Since you've created one godlike facade for yourself, why not invent another one for her?" I don't know, Adama's nuts. I can imagine that he actually thinks in these bombastic, over-explanatory Star Trek sentences, but it's really jarring to hear this stuff on this show. "It's another excuse to keep your distance," Carolanne helpfully voices over further, just so we're all on the same page. That page being huge and made of posterboard, with CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT written on it in bright highlighter letters, with glitter and gems pasted all over it, and a picture of a unicorn being ridden by a very frowny William Adama, and a hot dog flying into a giant crack in the side of a mountain, and a stick figure of everybody's mommy hitting them. Everybody in the whole world.

Roslin welcomes the Admiral to her temporary office, I hope but can't prove it's the same one she got giggly in before the debates that time, and she nearly blushes at him. "I'm sorry, I'm sure this all could have been done over the wireless, but very frankly, I was going a little stir-crazy on Colonial One, and had to get out." He nods, mentioning that "deepspace pilots call it OBE," which he explains -- in a way that calls to mind the sexiest, most debonair corpse ever to go walking -- means "Overcome By Events." Come on, you know this is his version of flirting. She laughs wildly, as though he has not only made a funny joke, but a joke that was very, very funny, which is her version of flirting. Which has the bonus effects of being A) flirting and B) totally hot, because she's totally hot when she laughs. "And you're always welcome here, you know that," he finishes up earnestly, and it's taken in the spirit that it's given, but she laughs again. "Well, you may not feel that way after you finish this. Tory actually drew up an agenda."

They dance around with alluvial deposits on their shoes and talk about Gaius some more. "Can't we just give him back to the Cylons?" asks Bill, and Laura smiles. "Oh, you know how much I love that idea. Unfortunately, given what little I was able to glean from the Caprica Six, I don't think the Cylons would take him back." So they'll have to try him: but apparently the Colonies didn't have any federal systems set up, which goes a long way explaining both the Sagittarons and my beloved Geminons. "Under what law? Caprican? Picon? Tauron? Do we give him a jury trial, do we set up a tribunal?" There's like only one lawyer in the Fleet, whom we'll be meeting soon and who I've always found to be about the sexiest human being to wear a bowler hat. They don't even have a comprehensive law library. Athena's the goddess of law, but that's Roslin, and she's throwing up her hands. If only there were another god associated with the law, just hanging around and not doing anything at all.

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Adama spits about lawyers, and she's surprised: wasn't Joseph an attorney on Caprica? "Yes. And I told you that I didn't get along with him very well." Awkward! She makes that embarrassed yee face for a second, and then moves on. "Right. Okay, I need to set up an organizing committee, though frankly, trying to get a room full of legal scholars to stay on task is like herding cats. And so I need to set up a chairman of this committee, somebody who can make a hard decision and who won't get seduced and bogged down by all the legalese." Specifically Lee. "Like grandfather, like grandson, perhaps?" Bill can't say that Lee would be bad at it, because who's more judgmental than Lee Adama, or more in love with rules when he's not breaking them, but then, that's how his relationship with Laura has always worked. "Here's the thing," she says. "We need the lawyers to parse the law, but we really need people who actually know the difference between right and wrong. That's Lee." Kinda. Unless it's "Black Market," or there's treason to be done, or he gets bored with the holy sacrament of marriage. Bill promises to talk to Lee, and Roslin nods. "Good. Admiral, I was wondering if you'd mind if I stayed on your ship for the rest of the day." He of course obliges, and she grins again. "This is very difficult for me to say, but I'm going to go to the gym." He reminds her that this is an aircraft carrier: "On its best day it smells like the inside of a shoe," he gruffs. Such a way with the ladies, our Bill. She just laughs, and sighs, and thinks about

Bill and how hard it is to get laid after the apocalypse.

Airlock 12: Chief's still snapping at Cally about getting that leak patched, and she's still snipping right back.

Bill makes his way past pilots and deckhands, watches them grow quiet and respectful as he goes past. "You're getting better at ignoring all of that. That sudden hush, those sidelong glances. That really used to get to you," Carolanne says. And there's a key here: this is an episode about marriage. Love is always some percentage projection: what you see, not what I am. How much magic or hatred you offload on other people, that takes them out of the real and into your projection; the godlike façade she was talking about. We put each other on pedestals and down into pits all the time: look at Cally loving Chief when he didn't notice, and what happened next; look at what Bill and Lee do to Carolanne in her absence. Human psychology is about projection. But the only people on this show who are the same on every level -- symbolic on the show, symbolic in the Fleet, symbolic to each other and everyone they meet -- are Laura and Bill. Laura is the head of government, Bill is the leader of the military. The difference between them and their pedestal selves is a lot slimmer than, say, that between Chief and Cally's image of Chief. Or the enormous amounts of bullshit the twins regularly offload onto each other. Hell, Caprica and Gaius have made it into an actual religion and/or art form. But the only people on this show that actually have to negotiate being that every single day, besides I guess Sharon Agathon, are Laura and Bill. Marriage is hard because love is partly me and partly you, and because in the movie of your life, you're a Laura and a Bill, and when you fall in love they become a Bill or a Laura, and marriage is about taking the bricks out of those pedestals one by one, until you can actually see each other. Naked, without all the hero worship and the family drama and the Just Like Dear Old Mom and the specialness getting all over everything and constantly disappointing you with reality. Marriage in Spanish is *casarse*, to build a home with: you build a cabin, and live there together.

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In the old house on Caprica, Bill jokes with Carolanne that he never seemed to intimidate her, and she nods. Pedestals. "I knew you long before you were the Admiral: back when you were just

Bill, the husband who wasn't there. The father who left." She wonders aloud what a Bill Adama really is; she wonders aloud if she'll ever get an answer. She's not the one asking. She's dead.

Noel Allison -- that Pegasus pilot I always call Nacho and is apparently "Narcho," but is I'm sure just as delicious -- follows the rest of them into the briefing room, wowing about how there's been 49 days since the last Cylon sighting. I wish somebody'd mentioned somehow that he was originally on Pegasus, because what we need right now -- with New Caprica, the Circle and the Second Exodus still so close behind, with Caprica in the brig -- is to remember the Pegasus, and hope we burned off what didn't work. Starbuck jokes that his crap flying has probably put the fear of the Gods in them. Helo and Hotdog sit down, Sharon in the row behind, Hotdog making weird faces and finally just digging right the hell up in his batch, like he's not in public. "I've got the weirdest rash," he tells Helo, and Sharon grins as Helo moves one seat over, away from him: "Hope she was worth it, buddy." After the fifteen plagues this season, I'm not convinced we're done with Hotdog's crotch just yet, frankly, and clearly it's still on his mind as Apollo enters, strong and harsh. "Before we get started, I want a show of hands. How many of you boneheads know how to count?" Slowly, the hands go up; Kara raises her hand with a smug grin as Adama enters from the back. "Because I keep hearing numbers being thrown around the hangar deck. 47, and then 48. Now 49 days, since our last enemy contact. I realize that any higher math's probably beyond most of you, so I'm gonna make this real simple for you: one is the only number you need to remember. Because all it takes is one pilot to let his guard down, one ECO to miss a dradis contact, and suddenly the Cylons are on top of us. That's when people die."

"He's like both of us," Bill thinks, flashing back for a second to that house, "proud, stubborn, and angry." Back to the briefing room: "But he's coming into his own. Especially in the last few months." Carolanne gets intense: "Don't tell me, tell him!" Or, you know, better yet, show us without telling anybody at all, since this is the first we're seeing and/or hearing about it. Bill shrugs that Lee knows, and Carolanne speaks up on behalf of Rabbit Angstrom and every other man who ever needed a hug in the history of the goddamn Western literary canon: "Knows what? That the Admiral's going to give him a good performance review? Or that his father loves him?" TAKE IT OUTSIDE. FUCKING A. Why

is it every time a writer on this show -- no, every male writer ever -- wants to tug your heartstrings and can't figure out how, they go straight to the Easy Rider/Iron John place? And just baldly repeat it, boilerplate? If you'd actually illustrate this stuff, that would be one thing; that's personal and real. But constantly pulling out the Your Personal Father Was Not Demonstrative With His Affection card every other second, without regard to setting it up or making it anything other than what it blatantly is, is lazy. Almost as lazy as everybody's drunk mommies hitting you with sticks all the time. I get it if this stuff applies to you personally, and you feel connected to it -- and in this case, have I got a literary canon for you! -- and I'm certainly not going into my personal shit with you about it, but there's a difference between a single reader's response and objective quality and craftsmanship of writing. "I liked it" is different from "it is well-formed." Every little kid has lost at least one pet, but I don't wanna read a hundred novels about dead pets written by five-year-olds, either. So fucking whatever: "Don't tell me the Admiral's facade extends to Lee too."

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Apollo continues to, apparently, "come into his own": "Formation flying. Deflection shooting. Tactics. Doing touch and goes until every last one of you hits an okay three. Red and blue sections will go first, yellow and green will follow. Skids up in ten minutes. Dismissed." The Pilots leave, Starbuck stays, to scoff and flirt and actually be nice. He tells her to shove it, but she's proud of him, and it shows all over. "My only problem is that you didn't preach that sermon a week ago." She reminds him, however, that the whole "one fatal mistake" line is a Bill Adama classic. As Bill walks up, Lee -- who looks damn good in this episode, and normally I don't really notice his looks -- quirks a smile and returns her vibe, a little bit: "Well, if you're gonna steal, steal from the best." I miss the twins so bad. Kara takes off, winking or something at Bill, and they're alone. Oh, maybe they'll hug, or he'll give him a set of Paul Revere's steak knives, or tell Lee he's always thought of him as a son, or something. Because if there's a person that Adama doesn't think of as his own personal child, I have yet to meet him or her. Not to mention that "he's always thought of Lee as a son" is...sadly apt.

Bill deadpans about how tough Lee was on the squad, and Lee



pronounces "a kick in the butt" to be worth "a thousand words." "Gods know you kicked mine enough," he says, I guess on the few occasions that Bill was home. He asks his father sweetly -- the two actors have great chemistry, and a lot to work with, so it's always good to see them together -- if he's okay, and Bill nods wearily. "President wants to take the fast track on Baltar's trial. She's looking for someone to take charge of the preliminaries, help cobble together the legal framework. She wants me to assign you." Lee pauses for awhile before expressing surprise. "She's gonna need someone she can trust, you definitely fit that," says Bill. They've met? And we didn't have a fake previously to tell us about this apparent relationship between Laura and Lee that never existed before? Or did we somehow remember their awesome friendship and tendency to commit sedition? Because if we're going back to that well, I'm prepared to fall in love with Apollo all over again. Then there's some more awful dialogue that I don't even know what to say about: "I remember when you were younger, you'd go visit your grandfather's house, and you were fascinated with his papers and his law books." His "papers," you see, and his "law books."

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"And there was me thinking I was being sly, sneaking off into his office all by myself. Yeah, I guess it's a pipe dream now, but for five minutes there I really did consider 'lawyer' as one of a dozen careers that I could go into, before I joined the service." They both make poo faces having to spit out this impossible, unmusical, jangly, consonantal, awkwardly constructed, unrealistic, over-wordy speechifying, and Bill's like, "I never knew that." Probably, Lee explains, this was during one of his "angry at Dad" phases. (Which: is gorgeous, because only Lee Adama would rebel in that way. "Fuck you, I'm going to read your estranged dad's 'law books' and 'papers'!") Bill's face at this, the mention of Lee having "angry at Dad" phases, strikes him like a blow. (Compare the video game boyfriend with the military-career father: don't go anywhere or change or grow or resent me until I get back in like five years, okay? Projection.) Lee realizes he really can't: "CAG's duty is already 24/7, even on a light week." He makes a funny frowny face when he says this, and Bill nods softly, suddenly torn. "Yeah, I assumed that." Narcho calls Little Boy Blue away to duty, and the Man in the Moon looks down at his hand; outside the old house, he drops a child's ball, and in

the briefing room watches it fall, invisible. At least it looked pretty that time, but my God. Kid's toys, now.

In Airlock 12, the alarms are going crazy! "Seelix, check the pressure. If that patch holds, we're gonna equalize in a few minutes. This door's gonna open." There's a sudden whistling sound: the patch is blown and the hole is bigger. The Chief and Cally don't really have much to say, in terms of adding to the conversation, although they scream profanities. Here's the thing about Chief: he never wanted to be married. Not on Galactica, not in the Fleet. He and Boomer were going to wait until they mustered out, when the holocaust came. He didn't even notice Cally until New Caprica. He wasn't going to get married, build a cabin, lay it down, until he knew he was safe. Until he knew they'd be okay, and he could keep them safe, and be strong. He didn't want to make any promises he couldn't follow through on. He wanted -- and this is all Cally's been saying -- to wait for the day when they'd have time. And he had that taken away from him, that ideal, and everything since has been his cruddy attempts to reconcile what he thought was happening with what's happening now; he's still waiting for something to happen, and make it better. And if they don't die in the process, he's about to get his wish.

Finally, somebody else on Galactica notices the alarms and the hole in the side of the boat, and Adama comes storming down the hall, flanked by Saul and Lee. Majel Barrett's like, "This is a condition three alert...hull breach on deck 14..." They come running up to the glass, standing alongside Seelix, looking down at the head of the Resistance and how well he fits back into his life now. "Admiral," he says, air growing thin and cold, "I seem to have turned this into a full-blown fubar. You'd be doing us a hell of a favor getting those doors open." Bill's face falls.

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"The airlock's designed to lock down if the pressure increases unexpectedly," Lee starts to explain, and Bill snaps at him. "-- I know the system. We have redundancies..." Nope. The manual override is down and they can't get the inner doors open. "The thing must've taken heavy damage on the way out of New Caprica." Tigh nods sagely. "Whole ship's taken a pounding. We'd need six weeks in dry-dock just to hammer out the dings, let

alone tackle the structural damage." I don't know why that line made me laugh, but I think it's the immense crotchiness with which it's delivered. Like if he still had both eyes, he could just glare the dings out. Lee explains -- he's experienced in these things, remember -- that a hole that size means "half an hour, maybe less." There's a billion years of explaining so that the hyper-literal nerds won't start with the "actually, they could have just blah blah blah blah," which is A) never going to stop them and B) doesn't add to the plot at all, not to mention C) if you think like a hammer, everything's going to look like a nail, and if somebody's determined to pick and pick and pick, they're going to find something. And yes, I do understand the irony, thank you, but honestly, there's a difference between subtleties of characterization as built up over years of both written words and expertly tuned performances, and the made-up physics of a made-up spaceship in made-up space. So in case you were thinking you might offer the made-up people some advice and get them out of this in a jiff, Tigh and Lee would like to inform you that it would take an hour to cut through the blast doors, they can't blow the glass because it's "strong enough to withstand a tylium explosion" and would kill Chief and Cally bad, and finally: there's no solution. Bill wigs out because if there's no Chief and Cally, then he might as well have killed them the day they broke ground, and if there's no Chief and Cally, there's no cabin, and if there's no Chief and Cally, that's two more children he's abandoned. If he loses Chief, who will punish him for losing Chief?

The twins stand with Sharon in the hangar bay, timing how long it takes Sharon's Raptor door to close: seven seconds. It feels weird to be in here without Chief, like we're all dancing naked with porn on Geminon or something. "Then another ten to repressurize, since we'll doing this in open space," says Kara. "That's pushing it." Sharon asks whether anybody's ever tried anything like this, and just in case watching it happen needs to get hyped some more, Kara's like, "No one's ever been crazy enough!" They're totally going to do a [Barn Swallow!](#) Into the arms of a Cylon! Specifically an Eight! That is SO AWESOME! This episode is not bad! Lee's like, "No talking, we're done. Prep for launch. We've only got 18 minutes left." Sharon's down, and starts getting amped, but I'm wondering about Kara right now, like has she ever dreamed about this? Saving someone from getting airlocked? If she'd never seen Laura murder Leoben, if she'd never prayed for

his soul, how would she have felt about the Circle, when it came for her? That one small body, traveling under enormous pressure, out into the endless gap of space, without air or warmth or light, on an eternal trajectory: how much hate would it take to watch that happen? How could you not dream of it?

("What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff -- I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day...I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be.")

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Airlock 12: Chief and Cally put on their oxygen masks. They look so tiny and thin; they're shivering. Chief tries to patch the rough spot again. Cally calls him over to Adama, at the glass. "Airlock's still jammed, Chief. Overrides are not responding." Chief notes that they're running out of options. What do you do when you can't get out? Turn into something else: "I'm going to take you out through the front door," Adama says, with all the grace and gravitas he's got. Chief nods, getting giddy and hypoxic: "You'll put a ship out there and rig up some kind of docking collar?" There's no time for a collar, of course: time's almost out.

Adama stands at the glass, looking down on Chief and Cally. "Sir, if you're talking about an EVA, we don't have pressure suits." He shakes his head. No options. "Athena's gonna position her Raptor in front of the airlock, hatch open. We're gonna blow the bolts right off of that door, and when it opens, you're gonna have to jump for it. Now, listen to me, both of you."

Cally and Chief stand at the glass, looking up at the Admiral. "You can do this. People have been able to live up to a minute in exposure to vacuum without a suit." True, apparently. Chief gets worried, Adama cuts him off; he can barely look at them.

It's later. Sharon's Raptor is away. Cally stops. "Wait. What about Nicky?" Chief's flagging, bends his back to Chief work, moving everything toward the door so they don't get crushed. "Galen...we both know what happens to kids in the Fleet when their parents aren't there for them." I thought Lee saved all of those kids? I mean, I suppose she means it sucks for them, is what happens. Abandonment by parents, gone to the war and

never coming home. Humanity is a Fleet full of orphans.

We stand at the glass, looking down. "Apollo and Dee," he says, as though it's obvious. "They'd take care of him." She shakes her head. "No. No pilots. He's not going through this twice." No more parents going off to war and never coming back. The Cylons have been gone 49 days, but their damage continues to take and take. She comes to the window. "Sir? There's a civilian family, the mother's name is Susan Deckler. She has a little girl. If anything happens to us..."

Cally and Chief stand at the glass, looking up at the Admiral. We don't see him speak, but he says he'll see to it. Cally holds her husband and cries, terrified. The Chief holds his wife, and apologizes for the dust on his shoes: "I was being selfish. I wanted you with me, like old times. I didn't think about Nick."

Adama looks down at them, crying and shivering, and his heart breaks. "I'm sorry," the Chief says. "I'm sorry," Bill says, silently, to nobody in particular. Cally promises her husband that the Admiral will save them; the Admiral looks down on them, through the glass. They share oxygen. In the airlock, on the site of murder and worse, Chief and Cally wait for the Cylons to take one more thing from them, and they share breath. I mean to say that Seelix looks down on them, through the glass, and Saul, as they step across the line of salt and wrap their arms around each other, tighter.

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"More than a few seconds out there, we're talking severe exposure. Decompression sickness. At the very least, hypothermia. They could freeze to death," says Saul. Bill orders somebody to make sure Cottle's hyperbaric chamber is ready. "I'm sorry," Cally says, and holds him in the whistling and the cold.

The Raptor comes around, Kara and Lee inside with Sharon; Lee calls their position in and Chief and Cally put their masks on. Adama and Seelix and Tigh look down, through the glass, scared to death. The Raptor comes alongside. Lee points out to Kara and Sharon that stuff is going to be flying out at them when they blow the doors, and Sharon assures him she can handle her bird. "Let's just get this done," says Kara. The Raptor door opens.

"Okay. No matter what, you hang onto me. Don't let go."

Adama's voice is nearly shaking, as he counts them down; Tigh almost shuts his eye. "Do it," says Bill. Ready to let two more children go, to try and save them from the war. The door flies out at the Raptor and hits her; Cally and Chief are among the crap rushing out. Lee and Sharon shout back and forth, working together: tactics and muscle, coming into their own. Chief and Cally slam onboard and Sharon closes the door. It takes seven seconds; for Bill I'd imagine it felt longer. "Raptor secured and pressurized. They're in rough shape, we gotta get 'em to sickbay right away."

Later, Lee comes in through the hatch and hangs back, until his father calls him in. But are Cally and Chief okay? "They're alive. But Doc Cottle's still evaluating their condition." Lee sits and gives him the hard look; he's coming into his own. "So are you gonna tell me what's going on with you?" Bill shows his son the picture: William and Carolanne, on their wedding day. Lee blushes, having forgotten. "Probably seems foolish. Especially the way that it all ended up, but...still. It still means something to me. We've never talked about it" -- Lee chokes -- "the divorce, your mother...it was a bad time for all of us. Your mother gave you and your brother a home. Stability." And for once the stilted talking means something: he's asking to be lied to; he's lying to himself and asking for help. "Dad, I know you want to believe that, but um..." He lets it go, shaking his head, lips bitter and his eyes on the floor. "You have something to say, son, just say it." Lee draws the line between four walls and stability; between the image of Carolanne as Mother and the wife that Bill knew. The projection Bill kept in his mind, thinking she'd never show that part of herself to their sons, as though she were two different women altogether. "The mood swings? It's why you left her?" Bill pleads, in his stoic way: "We had problems, but she cared deeply for you and your brother." Lee shakes his head. "Things changed after you left. I mean, there were times when she lost control."

Carolanne speaks, talking over her son. "Don't listen to him, Bill." Lee talks about her apologies, promises to make things better. Just Like Dear Old Kara, down there with the dust on her feet, making promises. (But you know her mood swings: they're why you left her.) In the old house, Carolanne laughs and pours another drink, trying to distract Bill, but the projection is coming



closer to the here and now: Lee's talking about drinking: "...And then all of her good intentions would just go out the frakkin'..." There's steel behind Bill's voice as he asks her: "Is it true?" Her face goes acidic, she becomes the other woman. "I can't believe you'd even ask me that," she hisses. "Damn it, is it true?" he shouts: he knows. He knows, he always knew, it was always happening, it's happening right now. If you're wondering how painful it is when these projections come crashing down, just ask Three. You know? Talk to Brokeback Boomer about what it's like, when you ask the question that ends the world. Ask Gina what happens when you have a second to think. Ask Starbuck, aiming right at Scar, remembering to live. Ask Lee, who dies over and over again. To projection! It's why we build bars. "And then one day, finally the apologies even stopped." Bill nods. "That's enough," he says, to somebody. To nobody in particular.

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"You walked out on me! The brilliant Commander who could lead all of his men into combat, but he couldn't find a way to live with his own family! Never lived anywhere for more than six months, just following you around from one base to another, waiting for you to come home. But you weren't here for any of us! Whatever was easiest for the great Adama!" She's dead. He's accusing the dead: "They needed you. They were our children." Her lip curls; we flip back and forth from the old house to Galactica, sitting with his son, faster than we have before. "They needed a father. All through your glorious career, you have prided yourself on being a leader of men, judging people. Always making the hard call. But when it came to the biggest decision of your life... Oh, Bill, you blew it. We were wrong for each other from the start, but you just couldn't accept that." She grins, with wicked satisfaction: "That's it. That's why you keep calling me back. Because if you had made that mistake..."

Bill stands on CIC, freaking out; she keeps talking: "It would just call into question all of your other decisions." He touches her face, in the old house. I don't know what the fuck she's talking about, besides Lee and Zak; I do know that carrying projection, that being on any kind of pedestal, is way heavier than loving anything ever is, in terms of burdens, and he's had to carry it all alone for way too long. Longer than we even thought, apparently.

"She was still your mother, Lee," Bill says. "I loved her." Lee agrees; he knows that. "I just don't think she ever loved you." Bill thinks sadly, but doesn't say anything. I say this: love has as many definitions as there are people in the world, and until you shake off the dust and fantasy and alluvial deposits from your shoes, you're always going to be stuck on New Caprica. Which is not, if you'll remember, the awesomest place. I'd rather be in love on shitty, horrible, scary old Galactica than living a lie or getting fake-married on New Caprica. Maybe that's the point of S3.5 after all: so much of S2.5 was heading toward New Caprica, laying down burdens and building cabins, believing that the world would give anybody a chance to stagnate like that.

If the overwhelming conclusion we can draw from the first half of this season, the whole Everything You Wanted deal, is what happens when you get lazy, then this is what happens when you leave that fantasy behind: deal with Everything You Don't Want, again. The way God intended. I always thought the Cylons existed to make the humans better, but now I think it was just New Caprica making them worse, you know? Burning off what didn't work. The Second Exodus is about stretching, getting stronger, getting better, becoming more, and all the resentment and pain and self-sabotage and refuge to fantasy that that entails. Of course it's hard, of course it's gross. New Caprica was eating lotuses and building cabins and getting naked under the moon, and then New Caprica became eating shit and the occupation and the exodus. Pretending you'll leave Dee just because you've always been in love with Kara; pretending you don't love Sam because you've always been in love with Lee. Pretending you're unified in the search for Earth while 57% of you are falling in love with humans and joining crazy religions or the Colonial Fleet. Pretending you can erase the pain of New Caprica through hate and fear and murder. Pretending you can erase pain.

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Seelix comes into sickbay, bringing Nicky to his father. Chief's weak, lying in bed. But is Cally okay? "Doc Cottle says she's gonna be okay, but it's gonna be awhile before she's 100%." I am absurdly happy to hear that. This show messed up my mind. Seelix helps him to his feet: the victim of the airlock, rescued from space by a Cylon -- Seelix helps this man to his feet. The hero of the Resistance, once-lover of the sleeper that shot the

Admiral. She's going to be okay, I think. Post-Circle, turning airlocking into a way to save lives is like finding out guns literally can shoot you in the cancer.

The Chief takes Nick to see his mother, in the Doc's hyperbaric chamber. Her eyes are black. (Sometimes space hurts people, even though it doesn't mean to.) They stand at the glass, looking down on her. "Cal. Cal, sweetie. Look who's here." She opens her eyes, and tries to smile; you can't touch through the glass. He's going to try. Seelix leaves, locking eyes with Adama; he forgives her.

"No matter what -- I don't know how -- we will manage. Find a balance."

"You and me. We will take care of Nick, okay," says Chief to his wife. "I love you." She holds her hands to the glass, and Chief leans down, holding his son's hand against the glass. Bill watches Chief, a father, with his son in his arms, and he thinks about fathers and he thinks about sons.

Lee comes home quietly and sits down at Dualla's side; she wakes up and smiles sleepily up at him. They kiss, and he notices a package: "It was here when I got in. It's from your father." He asks -- per telling his father hours ago that his ex-wife never loved him -- whether it's ticking. She smiles. "He left you a note." She married him to be an Adama. (That's like me marrying Hera so I can be an Agathon. Or marrying Caprica so I can be a Cylon. WHOA, I just thought about me and Six getting married; that would work to like a scary degree. "Who is Number One?" "You are, Number Six," okay, and we'd laugh but then we'd blow up Parliament or something. But damn would we have some awesome clothes, on the other hand. Throw outrageous parties; be golden. Start religions and revolutionary movements every five seconds. Plus, I always knew I'd marry a Canadian. That's like Dualla marrying Lee so she can be an Adama... And we're back where we started. I am going to think about this some more, I'd imagine.) She married him to be an Adama; everything he does is for the same reason. "Caprican criminal codes. These are my grandfather's law books." But what about his papers? "Your dad must've had these in storage all this time. Why's he giving them to you now?" There's an inscription.

For that day when we all have the time.

No matter what, I don't know how, we will manage. Find a balance. And that's the day we win, and that's the day we rest. And when there's no more war, Lee can orchestrate peace, and Bill can build a cabin, and lay down his burden, and step down from that pedestal. Or everybody steps up, onto theirs, so he can look them in the eye.

"I'm glad you stopped by," says Roslin, her body language crying out. "I have something for you. This was given to me by one of the Colonists, down on New Caprica." She holds out a silly old paperback, like they both love. Tory found it, in a pile of old clothes. *Blood Runs At Midnight*, it's called. "Don't let the title fool you, it's a pretty good mystery. I think you'll like it." Books for these two are like the lost language of flowers. After the mutiny, after they forgave each other under the Gods' watchful eyes on Kobol, to keep her alive, he said "fuck story logic," and he gave her a book. It is their policy never to loan books; only to give them. This is the language of their love, whatever definition is yours. "And it's not a loan. It's a gift." She gets -- is she nervous? She keeps packing, fidgeting, getting her makeshift office together, to go back to Colonial One. Unless he speaks.

He speaks. "You ever...think about the times...much? On...New Caprica?" She looks at him a moment. "I try to think about the good times, yes." Her eyes go wandering. "I do." He clears his throat and/or staves off an impending vomit attack. "One in particular stands out in my mind. You were wearing a really ... bright...red dress." Dude, me too. She was retina-violatingly hot in that thing. "Said you wanted to build a cabin." She leans back, in the international posture for *Bring It The Fuck On*, speaking like she kind of remembers what he's talking about. "It was at Baltar's groundbreaking ceremony." She grins. "I got a little silly that night." He takes his time replying. "You ever wonder what would've happened if the Cylons hadn't have come back?" She considers him. Say too much and you're a fool; say too little and you get Apollo'd right out the door without any nookie at all. The tree doesn't fall far from the apple, right, but also: it's hard when godlike faÅšades come face-to-face. That's like playing poker with tarot cards. "I think...given Baltar and the terrain, we couldn't

have made a go of it." She lets that sink in, and begs him to be the one to give in: "What about you? Do you think you would have stayed on Galactica? Or do you think you would have settled?" He goes gamer: "It's pretty hypothetical, isn't it?" Without thinking, she gives the proper answer: "It is. Until it isn't." The "you pussy" at the end of that sentence is silent. He doesn't fill in the blank.

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She breaks into gorgeous laughter, nearly doubling over for a second, appalled at herself. At her daring. At the tiny bit of alluvial deposits, so small you could miss it, she's let herself keep hidden. Like a silly girl: "Did I just say that?" Any Adama's better when he's not trying to run the game, be a man, hold back -- any Adama's better when he forgets himself, watch: "It's worth it just seeing you laugh like that," he says. They sober up, because those were some magic words right there. And some magic laughing. "We've been at war so long sometimes we forget what we're fighting for," he says. "Raise our kids in peace, enjoy one another's company. Live life as people again." Fine. You knew she'd go first, didn't you? That's the kind of person she is: give you every chance to prove yourself, but eventually she's going to get tired of fucking around, and then she'll airlock your ass: "Like that night on New Caprica, that's really what we are talking about, here, now. Isn't it?"

"That, and...other times..." Um, like every scene you two have together? Like that? With the incredible sweetness and really confusing hotness? "So," she says: "If the Cylons hadn't come back?" We swore a lot of things. "But they did." He smiles, so sadly. He's really...beautiful sometimes. Edward James Olmos, that face is a lot to have coming at you. But I swear sometimes he's really just -- and I don't mean this in a gay way or like he's pretty, because he's not, but because men have never been commodities, we don't have enough words for men, or for male beauty, without it coming off that way -- he can be really beautiful. He comes closer to her, as he's pulling away: "We have certain responsibilities." Somewhere Carolanne wins, and whatever happened before Carolanne that made him like this. Or he's right, and titans shouldn't ever clash in a sex-type way. I like thinking about unions that would actually ruin everything, like if Romeo Corp and Juliet Industries came together, they would

create a monopoly and kill all infrastructure or something. There have to be checks and balances, I guess. Maybe he's right. Or maybe he's just running, still. These are walking wounded: other words for Zak include the Wall of Remembrance, Kat, his wedding photograph. Olympic Carrier. Billy Keikeya. How can you risk wanting more, when you lose everything you love? Who can love in wartime?

"Yes we do, sir," she says, all packed up. "And, uh, I will be back. In a few days. And if you'd like, we can...talk more about that night." That, and other times. Tell us more about the other times! She turns back, at the door, putting her tags in so that even an Adama can't ignore it, while still staying true to her own circuitous shit. "Bill? The answer's yes." Dur. But just because she's a creature like no other: "I absolutely would've built the cabin." She smiles and leaves. Thirty-love, dude. Consider yourself spanked. He smiles to himself, and thinks about how in fifteen years he's so going to make his move. Once the war's over, and Nicky's grown, and Hera, and he has enough time, he's so going to get laid. Or ask to hold her hand, or accompany her in a turn around the garden, or something.

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Carolanne speaks to him, as he pours a good stiff drink. "Go ahead. Put it away, like you have after every anniversary." I love how even the script is like, "Bitch, not about you. The whole point of you is that it wasn't about you, which either turned you into an asshole or was because you're an asshole, but we're betting on some admixture of both considering that William Adama is incapable of having a family smaller than Every Single Person There Is, which is the point of this episode, and the series, and every Lie About Earth he's told since the show started. Put it away, Bill." She asks him to promise he won't take it out again. She's dead, human psychology is built on projection, he's asking himself if this is the end. It's never the end. "It'd be easier to hate you. But that would be a lie, Carolanne. And there's been enough of that, through our lives." If you had to look at how much of your life is the kind of lie that keeps you alive, you'd die. Him more than most, but not by much. "We had something, didn't we?" asks Carolanne, finally regretful. He nods. "Yeah. We had something." She kisses him, sweetly, all her poison drawn out; his self-hatred self-healing. I don't think we can survive unless the



man at the top finds a way to forgive himself. Sometimes he needs to be reminded.

The guilt, the regret, whatever it is, it's no longer speaking through her dead mouth, now that Saul and Seelix have cried in an airlock, and Chief can hold his son again, and he can take the books of law from the father that disappointed him, and hand them down to the son he disappointed, and know there's time to find a balance. There's time to drop all the projections and pull Jenga on all those pedestals, and bring it all crashing down, and build something better. Like he did with Sharon, up in the sky over New Caprica. That kind of bravery, and that kind of love: that's all Laura's asking for. To be naked, to build a cabin, to stop ignoring the alluvial deposits all over that proud ship, the lines of salt and broken seals, and learn the balance. To figure out that the day we finally have the time is today, and tomorrow, and all the days and years that follow.

"See you next year," he says, and puts away the photograph, and takes a drink, and says goodbye to her for a while longer, and climbs back up on that lonely pedestal again.

# THE ENGINE YOU'VE BUILT WITH YOUR BLOOD

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 16 | Aired on 02.24.2007

*Dirty Hands* - The Chief faces off with Roslin and Adama after an unofficial strike of worn-out workers leads to an official strike of everybody, and **Cally** almost pays the price for getting confused about the role of collective bargaining at the end of the world. But don't worry! She's fine!

**Recaplet:** Now that's how you do a stand-alone episode that doesn't feel like filler. A run-in with a Raptor puts Colonial One in the shop, leading to yet more flirting between Laura and Bill and also exposing the first thread in a whole messy sweater of civil rights, eminent domain, child labor, Marxist bloviations, and anger management. It is Chief who unravels the sweater, at his wife's behest, but it turns out she's been reading Gaius Baltar's new book, *Fomenting Civil Unrest Among Dirty Poor People*, which it turns out is easy as pie. Chief finds himself informally returning to his New Caprica role head of the Fleet's labor unions, with the glares of Madame President and William Adama making for some pretty awkward dinner conversation. At one point, for example, Adama goes all Helena Cain and threatens to line Cally up against the bulkhead and shoot her; even worse, he doesn't follow through. He kind of has a point, which is scary but involves how you deal with labor concerns during wartime: tricky, for obvious reasons. Roslin invents both prior restraint and book-burning, so she's still on her awesome trajectory. Chief gets his work-sharing system in place, and is granted official labor leadership by the President, who gets everything she wants without really giving up any ground at all. Meanwhile, Seelix is the victim of a glass-ceiling mentality that says only Capricans and the upper classes are allowed to be Viper pilots, but later on she becomes the newest nugget. She's not as annoying as Kat, but I think she's a worse person, so we'll see how that works out. She's pretty awesome in this episode, anyway. The trial inches forward after a really excellent scene between Tyrol and Gaius in which Baltar admits that his Caprican poshness is just an affectation, and he's really Aerolon, like Boomer was. Then they go to the races, and he embarrasses the Chief with a long, drawn-out story about how his auntie was burglarized while on her death-bed, claiming that "them as pinched it done her in," but

Chief's too busy noticing that Gaius is right about everything, again, some more, and leading to the destruction of humanity in a whole new labor union-based way, and also adding some weird Hitler shades to his Jesusness. Next week, we meet an up-and-coming pilot named Kara "Starbuck" Thrace, who may well have a destiny of some kind. You might remember her from a long time ago on this show.

**Recap:** Previously, Roslin fully scoffed when Gaius begged for legal representation and due process, but then she kicked off her shoes and took the Admiral's bed for a spin before realizing she totally actually has to give him a lawyer and a trial. Chief Tyrol told somebody that his family was Geminon priesthood, and that he's been serving on "the Battlestar" since he was eighteen. Which goes a whole other place in this episode. Then on New Caprica, he became the president of the union, and gave a speech from Earth history, and there was a strike we never saw. He was totally awesome. Then a while back, Cally got after him about how he still wants to be like they were "before" they were on New Caprica, but I disagreed with her logic: I think he wants everything to be like it was on NC, with I guess the exception of being in a concentration camp run by robots. This is the best previously in a while, because the poundy drums go insane at the exact second that he goes, "What if rough patches are all we have left?"

Now, in the hangar bay, we've got some visual stuff going on that is beautiful and kind of on the nose. The episode is called "Dirty Hands," so get ready for some hands. Chief orders the usual orders while a thousand sets of hands do machinery things. Also, crazy music plays. I just this week finished my essay for a book about [Firefly/Serenity](#), so the music kind of reminded me of that. It's like if you...oh, shit. I was going to say, "it's like if you took the music from 'Pegasus' and turned it sideways," but that's not really a funny joke this week, and it occurs to me that that is the entire point for this weird music. This episode really got to me; I don't know if it's because I haven't slept in two weeks or what, but I was crying like the entire time. I think there are lots of reasons. [Here's one more:](#)

"I only knew Admiral Cain for a short time, so what I have to say about her will be short. She faced things. She looked them right in the eye and she didn't flinch. That's something that we do a lot

around here. We second-guess. We worry. When I think about what she went through after the attack -- all alone, one ship, no help, no hope -- she didn't give up. She didn't worry. She didn't second-guess. She acted. She did what she thought needed to be done, and the Pegasus survived. Might be hard to admit, or hard to hear, but I think that we were safer with her than we are without."

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She knew. All that time, all those choices, all that long ago: she knew. Remember Pegasus, I kept saying, after the Circle: Remember Pegasus. Even when we met her, even when Kara said her eulogy, I wondered how you live with that in your history, in the walls; how do you go on living where that can't happen, when you've seen for yourself it can? How do you pretend it never happened when it's all over you? How do you keep your hands getting dirty when your hands are all over it? There's lots of yelling, in the bay. Lots of hands, and crazy music, and the tylium floods down, through and into wherever it goes. Figurski wonders: weren't there some maintenance jobs they were subbing out to the civvies in Dogsville? Chief shakes his head: he doesn't know enough of them. Galen means physician. He's the Cottle for the ship, for the Vipers and the Raptors; it's not only the color of his collar that made him perfect for the union on New Caprica. Pollux asks him if she's ever getting rack time; he blows her off in that Helo-bureaucratic way. Everybody else (Figurski) makes fun of her for the ringing in her ears, but it's not funny. Some cute dude says a bunch of stuff to some Raptor pilot about how this and that, and she takes off in her tank, and Seelix comes into the bay, bearing laundry. It took these people two years to do their laundry, but now? Every week with the laundry.

Seelix yells at the hands on deck to grab their crap before she chucks it in the "cyclor," so apparently...one thing I really like about this episode is how it steps into the terrain of science fiction in ways that don't offend me, if you know what I mean. The whole "inheritance of occupation" issue is so totally Greg Bear, who is in turn so totally my boyfriend; the mention of how they get rid of crap in the cyclor, I like that. It's not that I hate science fiction so much as I hate the ease with which you can reach for its tropes, if necessary. Speaking in the language of sci-fi is fine, as long as it's not the emotional language of sci-fi, which is four

words long at best.

Let's do the whole "who wrote what" thing again, since I'm never saying aloud the name of the person who wrote the one two episodes from now. This episode is brought to you by the combined powers of Anne Cofell-Saunders, my favorite writer on this show, and Jane Espenson, one of my favorite human beings. Jane wrote the [Kat episode](#), as well as about a million episodes of every other show you love, and I found out today that I'm allowed to tell you that she's coming on staff for sure, as of this week I guess. So that's brilliant! Anne wrote "Pegasus," ["Sacrifice,"](#) ["Lay Down Your Burdens, Part II"](#), and ["Torn"](#), and is credited on story for ["Resurrection Ship, Part I"](#). She loves Asimov, Herbert and Card; so do I, so should this show. My favorite thing she's said is how she taught in Japan, and she approaches Laura that way, as a schoolteacher first and foremost: you have to set boundaries. The whole "You have to kill Cain, stupid" approach, or like I was saying about the old people romance stuff: eventually it's time to get real. It gets a workout this episode, in some awesome ways and some less awesome ways, and some pretty scary ways too. Anyway, I wanted to mention that in case you thought Roslin was not being as scary as she seemed: this is the woman who created Admiral Helena Cain. Roslin's being twice as fucking scary as you think, and I'm here to tell you why.

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Figurski asks about his "undies," which made me cliché a little in my mouth, and Seelix does what I'm counting as the third brilliant elision of "frack" so that it sounds mighty like what it means. (The first one was I think Gaeta, and the second one was Gaius when Roslin was about to airlock him a couple weeks ago. I think it should just be like a Rae Dawn Chong Challenge and every script should have at least one mumbled "frack" in it that they can totally just say "fuck" and then point to the script: "Says right here: 'frack'!" That's adorable.) I really like the actress that plays Seelix, but the Cavil thing is...not something I'm going to bore you with right now, because this episode is more about how she's the new Kat and less about how she's the new Cally. Or the old one, because Cally this week is totally lovable and wonderful, weirdly. Figurski asks if they "let officers" talk like that: "Gonna have to change your ways when you get them wings." Again, I'm not saying anything, except for how I agreed with Kara at the

time that putting little Decepticon head Raider markers on your fuselage is tacky, and I know that Seelix would love it. But not today: "I'm not getting wings. They rejected my application for flight training... turns out I'm in a critical position, and my leaving would cause 'severe mission degradation'." Cally, sweetly and looking pretty lovely, takes a moment to say, "That sucks." Pollux, who is I guess the new Seelix, cracks that it's not the critical position thing -- Seelix rocked her written and the interview went well -- so much as "they just don't want knuckledraggers stinking up the Pilots' ready room." Seelix's face is sad; everybody laughs. Chief steps in and shuts them up.

Privately, he tells her he's sorry she got bounced from flight training, and agrees with his wife that it sucks. "Truth is, we need you down here. You're the best avionics specialist we've got." Seelix is like, "This lemonade is delicious!" Figurski steps in all, "Plus she can fold a man's undies," and she totally jumps his ass, which takes me about 40% of the way to being where I need to be in order to care about Seelix, because it's awesome, and I hate Figurski both categorically and in particular right now. Chief peels her off his stupid ass and threatens to "pop [him] in the mouth [him]self," which I would dearly love to see, and sends everybody back to work before hauling Seelix back. I liked Kat, and I loved Kat's episode, and it seems weird to be setting Seelix up in the same exact thing Kat spent the last season going through, when Seelix has all this really intense and horrible backstory that we're ignoring, but I trust the process, I suppose. Her voice is mellifluous, so that's one thing that she has on poor Kat. "You do important work down here. Just as important as sitting in a cockpit," Chief Chiefs, and she tries to be nice about it: "Thanks, Chief. I gotta deliver some more important laundry." She's not even really scoring a point, just kind of bummed. (I invite you to imagine how Cally would act in this situation, for example.) She grabs her laundry and her clipboard and takes off; Chief feels bad and looks delicious and is thinky about everything.

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Out in space, Racetrack is away and calling readings back to Galactica when she hears a bang, and she and Skulls both react. Things start to get effed up, and their voices climb similar ladders as they call out their exposition home. There's a fire in engine



two, and they're drifting and about to blow.

It's calm on Colonial One : Tory putters around, Roslin writes a list of inalienable rights and checks off the ones she's aliened, and thinks about what she has to wear to get Bill to notice her, and what Sagittaron five-year-old she can force into tailoring it.

Out the window, Racetrack's Raptor drifts toward them, faster and faster as she gets closer. "Eject! Eject!" screams Racetrack, among a lot of other things, and I assume they do so. Her Raptor hurtles closer and closer to Laura's beautiful face.

It's calm on Colonial One : Laura looks out window, into the black. Credits.

41,400 souls in the Fleet, meaning that in addition to being stupid and sucky, Dr. Robert was also incredibly bad at being a serial killer. Bill moves Laura back into a temporary living space that's different from her usual temporary office, and tells her how lucky she was: "A dozen injuries, no fatalities." Laura's sweet and funny as she full-body shudders: "You should've seen Tory's shoulder; I had to help Cottle put it back in alignment. Ugh!" She apologizes to Bill for taking up space while they repair Colonial One , and he just smiles. "Well, if the quarters become cramped, you're always welcome in one of my beds..." Is he a virgin? What's the deal with my man Adama? They both jerk to a halt at this obvious entendre and lock eyes, smiling sexily. "...In a manner of speaking." (Okay, but how hot would it be if a guy acted like this on purpose? Oh my God it would drive you nuts. I hope he's totally doing it on purpose.) She laughs and fluffs her hair and caresses her herself and comes way closer and puts on a concerned face. "Do you have any better idea what happened to your Raptor?" These sexual tension/change-the-subject scenes are so awesome, because they're like 10% funny, 60% sexy, and the other 150% is this weird thing where it's like they've had sex and just forgot, or like you've had sex with one or the both of them, and you just want to scream at them about how easy it actually is so stop dog-paddling and take off the training wheels and whatever metaphor. Convert to representative government. Of your junk.

Of course, Bill's loving this step away from sex: "We're still investigating the situation, but it seems that the tylium was seriously contaminated with impurities. Most likely, it's a problem

with the refining process." I'll say. Man! Roslin rolls her eyes and asks what the hell's going on at the tylium factory. "That refinery used to be the most reliable ship in the Fleet -- now every day, I start with a stack of messages from that Chief ... What is his name?" (Xeno Fenner, of course, just like whatever sci-fi name that crazy conspiracy lady was named in "Sacrifice.") Roslin snorts about Fenner: "Conditions, deliveries, spare parts, and compensation, if you can believe that. We're on the run for our lives, and the guy wants to talk about overtime bonuses." She takes a sip of wine and eats some delicious grapes and grunts from her shiatsu massage. Adama worries about how they've been waiting two weeks for Fenner to get his act together, and then tosses her the bouquet about how if they're waiting on labor, how the hell are they ever going to get to Earth? Roslin grins and whispers. "Is that a hint of hope I hear? Has the skeptic suddenly decided that we're on the road to Earth after all?" Bill pulls that thing he does, where he solves the equation faster than you noticed the question being asked: "Have I ever doubted it?" Um, since you made it up the first time we ever saw you, I guess not. That's adorable. Of course he believes in Earth. He only, what, [supported Tigh's coup and arrest of Roslin](#) based on the fact that he knew he was lying. Even Roslin is like, "Cute for sure, but seriously? I said I'd build a cabin, not rewrite history. We can totally knock boots without you lying about the lying lie of Earth. I've dealt with it." Not to mention how they both gave in to the fakeness of Earth when they gave the election to Baltar based on his lying about the lying about the lie of Earth, and ended up in a concentration camp. I'd switch sides too!

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Fenner meets with the Admiral and the President, bringing up how there are people in the refinery that have been working 18-hour shifts for the past six months, or longer. Adama's like, "Yeah, but if the Cylons show up, can we jump? Maybe once." Roslin hmms and nods. "That's a margin that's much too narrow for me. How about for you and your men? You have a problem: fix it." What I like is that he's laying out the whole unanswerable question of the episode up front: war demands sacrifice, but sacrifice isn't a bottomless well. It's not just pilots that die, or get tired or crazy; the one advantage the Cylons have always had is that they don't die. This is the flip side of that: how do you run just as fast and far as an immortal enemy, when you fall down

sometimes? It's terrible to contemplate. This whole 3.5, and 2.5, have avoided asking the questions like this, because you can't solve them narratively, which is what writers like to do. This episode is about what it's like to be fucked, independent of the bad guys, which frankly the whole demi-season should always be about, instead of creating problems that are either negligible (2.5) or nonsensical (3.5, "Black Market") -- everybody in the episode has both a stake and a valuable viewpoint, and all of them are right, and all of them are wrong, and we're fucked, and that's so much more satisfying than a bunch of episodes where either the problem is made up and stupid, or people act out of character in order to make it easier, or whatever it is. Sudden kids in sex danger or sudden racist serial killers are easy to close the loop on: this story lets itself breathe, and I can think of about ten episodes in the last two seasons that could have used being less obvious. This story doesn't click closed like a box, and that makes it better. It's like during the Occupation: whoever's talking, they're right, because everybody's right, and not knowing that is how you end up at war.

"Just get the gas flowing, and then we'll talk. I promise you that," says Laura, just like always. Always tomorrow. Fenner points this out, and goes... I'd say a tad farther than is really smart: "You know, it's funny that when the gas flows, my phone calls don't get returned, but the minute there's a glitch in the fuel supply, I've got face time with the President and the Admiral? Hmm. Maybe we should just start having more glitches." The actor that plays Fenner, in addition to being hot, is also canny in letting you in on all fifteen levels of you know-I know-you know-that I know going on here. Roslin asks if he's threatening them, which is in itself a threat. "It's like the book says: 'If you hear the people, you'll never have to fear the people.'" Laura Roslin's voice goes to a place that is deathly terrifying: "Did you say the book?" He nods; he knows that she knows that he knows what book she knows he's talking about. She goes hard. "Okay, guards? Arrest him for extortion and interrupting vital services during a time of war. Go ahead, take him away, that's it, go. Out of here. Gone." The Marines shuffle him off and Bill asks what the hell just happened. "He was quoting from Baltar's book." She spits it out. I guess my whole assumption that she was somewhat chilled out after [freaking out during his MKUltra trial](#) didn't do a thing for her hatred of him. It's so weird to see her still hating him so much,

after all that time wishing she'd kill him. Now I'm just scared she will. "He's having it reprinted and passed out among the Fleet." The book he wrote is called *My Triumphs, My Mistakes*, she spits, and notes how she's "thinking of having a good, old-fashioned book-burning." And if that word scares you, it should: part of speaking truth to power is knowing that if there's nothing to hide, they won't.

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Back home, Cally tuts Chief about how he's not allowed his disgusting algae meatloaf, because he's on a date, and when he complains about how [today's his cheat day](#), she just smiles. "The last three days have been your cheat day." He didn't realize. He acts cute with Nicky and notes that she's moving around, proving the bends wrong, and she says she's wiggling about Seelix's whole thing. "They should have just told her right off the bat what the Fleet priorities are, should have said that they needed knuckledraggers more than they need pilots." Cally shakes her head, of course, because God forbid reality get in the way of your dreams or your unearned successes. If there's one thing [American Idol](#) has permanently ruined for me, it's being sympathetic to people bitching about the way things are. I mean, I appreciate Cally in this episode and I don't have a problem with what she's saying, because somebody has to say it and she's like perfect for this role, but in addition to my general issue with Cally, I have a problem with anybody who says this stuff while thinking it matters. Yeah, it sucks; saying that doesn't change it. Somebody particularly martyrific and self-obsessed might become a fulcrum for change, but that's not you, and that's not what this is about. This is about freshman year and learning about the evils of capitalism, and my assumption is that we're all older than that, so read your Orwell and don't email me. If you think that's what's going on here, they got you. It's the abortion fight all over again; it's gay marriage 2.0.

"It isn't about Fleet priorities. We're not part of the ruling class, so we're stuck doing the dirty work." Chief's like, "Bwuh?" Oh, just something she read. By Gaius Baltar. Well, why didn't you say so? Baltar's always been proficient with realities and not superhero fantasies where he's the star and hero of absolutely everybody, I would definitely listen to him. Chief scoffs, and Cally admits that it was a hard sell, but: "Do you ever wonder why all the pilots and

the officers come from the rich Colonies, like Caprica, or Virgon, or Tauron, while all the knuckledraggers come from the poor Colonies like Aerelon and Sagittaron? And Geminon?" Chief blows this off as just another rough patch, just "trash talk on the deck," and she challenges him to name an officer left on the Fleet that comes from a poor Colony. He thinks a bit, and of course names Dee, who's the only Sagittaron any of us would deign to know personally. Her triumph is ugly in a particularly Cally way: "Case in point! How did she get promoted? She married an officer...from Caprica!" Um, you just indicted your trashy self from about nine different angles, Little Miss "Who Could Marry A Man Who Doesn't Love Her," but whatever, I actually really like her in this episode. ["Oh, clearly. Hee." -- Joe R]

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The phone rings, thank Gods, and Adama's on the line: "Chief, the foreman of the fuel refinery has just been arrested." Xeno Fenner. Cally immediately asks what happens to him; Chief of course ignores her entirely. Chief wonders -- given that Fenner is a good guy and was in the union on NC -- what he did. "Pissed off the President," Adama admits. "But the bigger problem right now is the refining operation." He orders Chief to get over there immediately with a team, and Chief hangs up and starts lacing his boots. Cally asks about Fenner: "He pissed off the President," Chief deadpans, and even though he's not kidding and doesn't know it, he's still funny. Luckily Cally's always ready for whatever most victimizes everybody: "What, you can get arrested for that now?" They wonder if Adama was kidding, and Cally asks if Chief ever thinks about the union any more. "New Caprica's gone, but the people in the union are still here. Only difference is, now they don't have anyone to stand up for them." Welcome to this entire episode, as narrated by Cally Tyrol. Chief's just like, "I gotta go."

Meanwhile, Roslin's perpetrating. Marines stab Gaius's mattress and rip it from step to stern, as he leans against the wall, bitching. "I do hope you're enjoying yourselves. It's not enough you have to interrupt my sleep and put filth in my food, now you have to destroy my stuff as well..." Mid-whine, and it's not like he doesn't have a point, Roslin steps into the anteroom. "Hello, doctor. Why don't you do yourself a favor? Hand over the pages and stop all this nonsense." He tells her he doesn't know what she's talking about; her response: "Turn him around." (Remember

Pegasus!) They rip open his pillow and Roslin keeps talking, about the book. "So you've read it? The people are reading it and now you're sorry." Every conversation between them is like the first conversation between them. Dude, she's never going to be sorry. She's never going to be in your story where you're the good guy. Her quote is too high for that movie. Roslin jokingly, Cavilly, tells him they've been intercepting his pages every time he passed them to his violently hot lawyer, and that she's the only person who's read them. "...And I am dying to see how it ends." Chilling, just as she intended. I don't like this flavor of Laura, even though she's still the only person that always makes complete sense, but I really don't like how she's making me side with Gaius Frackin' Baltar. That's just so wrong. She makes fun of him for casting himself as "man of the people, the son of a farmer, a revolutionary? Oh, please." She actually says that, and it's actually awful. He tells her that his new plan is to strike a chord with the common man, which is funny because he totally had that, by virtue of being a sexy smart celebrity, until he put everybody in concentration camps. Ooops! Roslin threatens him with a cavity search, and he looks down, so she tells the "gentlemen" Marines to proceed. They strip him to his undershirt, and again: this is not the time to be finding Gaius Baltar attractive for the first time ever. Of all times. That's like three "Our Fathers" and a "Free Mumia."

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Laura actually smiles as his degradation continues: chilling. There's a "funny" little Gaeta moment that's really heavily encoded where the Marine's hands searching his pants become Chip Six's hands, gently caressing. I don't have the time or the degree to explain that to you in all its dimensions, but being strip-searched by sexy buff Marines in front of Laura Roslin, and all of a sudden invisible and possibly not-real girlfriend is raising the dead? I don't know how to deal with all those issues at once, at least not since that one guy I dated in college. Life is short. "Don't bend to her, Gaius. Show her that she can't break you. Keep your dignity." He caresses her hands, which don't exist, bemidst the dude shaking him down...and pulls the pages out of his undies, as Figurski would say. As cocky as you can be with a George Constanza boner mid-Miranda, he flourishes them: "Perhaps you'll consider writing a blurb for the back cover." She gestures to the Marine to take the crotch pages, and thanks him curtly, leaving.



Left alone, Gaius leans against the wall sadly, and Six appears again. "It's all right, Gaius. Everything'll be okay." It will. I know it will. She leans her head against the wall, near his; he's alone.

Chief and Seelix take a shuttle to the refinery, where he meets up with Cabott, a worker he knows from some other time. They hail-fellow for awhile and then head around the factory for a tour. Cabott admits that Chief -- who's not terribly happy to hear it, right now -- is an enduring hero of the blue collar. The Man They Call Chief, if you will. Chief doesn't know how to deal with that, because his hands haven't been this dirty since the apocalypse. Not really. Chief looks down at the tylium stores and asks how many jumps are left: "We'd be lucky if we get out of the system," Cabott laughs. Chief makes a scared face, but asks for the rest of the tour. The mining operations are...if you asked my friends, people who know me, what my least favorite thing in the universe is, they would unequivocally say, "Any TV show or movie or story or anecdote about poor people. Especially in factories. Especially politically active." Not pretty, but there it is. Those movies piss me off. And yet. These people are working, grimy and tired-looking; there are sparks near dirty hands, movement along the line, young men and women, the very old, people soldering. It's a big operation. Cabott laughs that Chief should see it when it's "up and running": "Loud as an A-bomb, just about as safe." Nice.

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Cabott, as they continue the tour, tries to explain conditions, how they really need the downtime. How next time it might not just be a Raptor. "This ship...it really is a big bomb, waitin' to go up." Chief's still in his sympathetic-but-unradicalized bureaucratic phase, and tells the guy to just fucking fix it. A young kid named Milo (12, Some Poor Colony) approaches, telling him it won't matter. Chief wigs about the child's age, and Cabott kind of stutters about what a great "grease jockey" they've got. (Which exact thing Chief said to Seelix this week and Cally last week, obviously, and I don't see anything less humane about child labor than putting those two MHMR cases to work, but then they're both much awesome this episode, so: Milo.) Milo won't tell Chief why it "won't work," and Chief starts to figure out what's going wrong, here, which is that the obvious thing that's happening is actually happening: random seals and stuff are missing. Milo's

too tired to be gleeful as he smears it in the Chief's face: "Guess they got lost, huh?" Chief gets scared, and not in a middle-management way; in the Chief way. "Guys, you can't be fracking around with this stuff. The admiral won't stand for..." Milo notes that the Admiral can kiss his ass, and Cabott steps back in. "Come on, Chief. You know what this is about. I guess when working conditions improve, and they let Xeno out of jail, we'll be able to find those seals." Until then, of course, they just happen to be looking at a total tylium shortage, and the Fleet is going nowhere. Xeno's Paradox, yeah? Unanswerable questions, nothing moving forward.

They search the ship, as Chief explains to the Admiral, but the seals are still missing. Adama correctly calls this sabotage and wants to lock them up, but Chief thinks their concerns are legitimate. Which they would be, if this wasn't a war for all humanity; for humanity, which is still made of people. Impossible. "They could have tried something to have me injured, they could have contaminated the fuel on purpose and left all of our ships dead in the air..." Roslin wows at that one. "All they did do was buy themselves some time. Look, the machinery does need overhauling." He points out that quality control is failing not entirely out of malice, that most of the people on the refinery ship have been working since the original apocalypse, that it's tantamount to slave labor. Adama hefts his (literal, this time) glass of wine and tells him not to be absurd. "The men and women aboard that ship are stuck there. They can't leave, they can't transfer. They have no control over their lives." He's right. "And they work hard, we know that," says Laura. She's right too: "Do they think they're having a picnic at the algae processing plant? Or munitions, or waste-processing? The Fleet is filled with ships with people working under horrific conditions, and nobody's having a good time." Whoever's talking, they're right. But Laura -- in this scene mostly -- is more right. Chief suggests that they release Xeno and start talking about working and living conditions, and hopefully they'll return the seals and get some tylium happening. He's right. Laura's right too: "Extortion is not an acceptable method of protest. What are the names of the leaders?" Adama looks over at her, because she's somehow both the hardass and the guardian of humanity this week, while behaving more ickily than ever; Chief is sad. "...Just Cabott." Roslin and Adama agree to toss him in the brig, and Chief

protests, and Laura cuts him off with that way she has: "-- Chief. Uh-uh. We're done."

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Chief tries to sleep, but eventually gets up to check on the now two labor people he's gotten put in jail. Cally stares into space and acts "sleepy" some more. In the brig, Cabott is...really not doing well. Fenner says a soft hello to Chief, begging him to get Cabott out of there. His hands are raw and bloody, blood everywhere, his dirty hands covered in blood; he's murmuring, mumbling, crying, screaming. It's awful. Fenner explains that he woke up in the middle of the night to find Cabott scratching, at the walls. Scratching at them until he bled. Like Ellen, like Kara, like Sharon. He's still screaming: "Say it doesn't matter, say it doesn't matter..." Xeno Fenner explains that he was in detention on NC. "You remember. He came out squirrely, and this not helping. Come on. You gotta get him outta here." Cabott continues to cry, and bleed, and scratch. The Cylons didn't really know what they were doing when they put us in cages; they thought they were doing their best, that they were doing the right thing. And now Laura's doing what she has to, and Bill's doing what he has to...but Cabott's hands are still covered in blood. You tell me.

Chief asks Fenner where the seals are, and Fenner's face falls, like Cally's the day she realized Boomer couldn't do anything for her: "Oh, you son of a bitch." Locked up tight. Chief begs for Fenner's help, Fenner begs for the Chief's help. They're both right. They're both wrong. Chief ignores Fenner and starts to scream at Cabott begging him to listen, begging him to tell him where the seals are. That's all it would take, and none of them can break the deadlock. "It doesn't matter, say it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter..." Fenner screams, Chief screams, Cabott bleeds. Fenner calls Chief "Galen," begging over Chief's shouts, over Cabott's. Fenner begs Chief to just look at him: at the extremity he was edging toward, before the Occupation, before the Second Exodus, before detention, and where he is now. Where Gaius says they all are. "It doesn't matter! It doesn't matter!" Cabott screams; Fenner finally -- compassion, finally -- gives in. "They're in the central stern air vent," he shouts, and Chief finally asks a Marine to confirm their release with Madame President. Fenner paces. Cabott screams; his hands bleed.

Chief's hands are dirty again, replacing the seals in the refinery. Milo begs to throw the switch, and when Chief asks how old he is, he doesn't even blink: he's twelve. "I can run every machine we've got, the only thing I haven't done is turn the whole thing on." Chief gives him the con and Milo pushes the lever, the alarms go nuts, everybody stares, the tylium keeps rolling. Chief looks at them, and thinks about how young they are; how young Milo is.

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"There are kids down there, Madame President." Roslin's willful: "There's children on every ship in the Fleet," she says, ignoring the spirit for the letter. He presses. "The children work in the refinery. They're 12, 15 years old..." She fights him again: "There have been families aboard the refinery ever since its beginning, and others were picked up after the Cylons attacked the Colonies." Ever since, the parents have been passing their knowledge on to their children, to keep the Fleet moving, to get everybody onboard working. "Perfectly normal," she says, and in that context it is. "It is not ideal. I know that," she spits. "But there is nothing ideal about this Fleet." He points out how the jobs are being inherited, which is a valid science fiction trope. But. But, add that to the emerging aristocracy issue Cally sees happening for some reason named Baltar, and the more legitimate question which is suddenly central to the episode: what if there's no Earth? What if we're not storing up riches in Heaven? What if there's no Gods, and Earth is a lie after all? What then? This is why Communists are atheists: what if this is all there is? What if we keep running, forever? The lines we draw in the salt now, the systems we put in place now, aren't just preserving the Colonies as they are, they're creating the Colonies as they will be. The responsibility isn't just to preserving democracy and the spirit of the Colonies while in a time of war, but making allowances for what happens if this never ends. If all we have left are rough spots, what then?

I've never wanted Earth to be a lie so bad in my whole life. "What if it's ten years? So I train my son to be a deckhand because that's what I am, and that's all he can ever be? Is that the future we want?" She pauses, and either accepts the truth of it or ignores it entirely, depending on how she's feeling about the Earth issue today. Her smile is sad, and accepting, and loving,

and strong. "That's a really good point. Tory? I want you to make a list of everyone in the Fleet who has a work history appropriate to the refinery. Factory workers, mechanics, whatever you think. Give it to the Chief. And I want you to hold a public lottery, and we will take people from other vessels, and we will put them on shifts in the refinery. How's that, Chief?" She's getting too good at this. He's right, but she can still swallow his truth inside her own: move resources around to solve the problem. Except they're not "resources," they're people, and we're back where we started, and Chief thinks like a mechanic so he doesn't catch it either. I don't think she's doing evil yet, but I do think she's dicking with him because of how forests work: they're made of trees. He leaves and they thank each other; when he leaves she goes steely. Telling them they have choices is the same thing as giving them choices, isn't it? When even she can tell he's got a point, why not give in -- in precisely the way where you lose nothing? But the tylium keeps rolling.

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Chief and Figurski deal with the conscripts, including an allotment from Dogsville: "Get these people on these ships before they know where they're going," he says, scarily, and Figurski laughs. A kid, twenty or so, named Danny Noon, approaches. He's played by the most amazing young actor; I can't find out his name, but I know I've seen him before, and it kills me that I can't figure it out. He's so great. Not only is his technical acting, the way he says words, awesome, but he also creates a pretty hard-hitting character. It's funny to have somebody so obviously red-shirted introduced so late in the episode, but man does he make the best of it. He makes the episode, to be honest: I cried when Laura was stripping Gaius, because apparently that's what I do this season, but I didn't really freak out until Danny showed up. That can't all be my neurosis of people not recognizing how special I am, can it? The kid's actually fantastic? I can't believe his name isn't anywhere, he just became my favorite actor. Way to go, Hey It's That Kid! You nearly killed me!

So Danny comes running up begging for a second of Chief's time: "Excuse me, sir? Hi, um, I don't really know who I'm supposed to talk to about this, but I don't really think I'm what you guys are looking for. I don't really have the skills?" He's like every memory you have of being forced to go to Daru Mozu Summer Camp, all

at once. Figurski checks his clipboard: "Says you're a farmer." Chief's like, "Exactly what we need," and Danny nods. "No, I don't, not really. See, I worked on a farm for a summer, because I was saving up to go to college. Architecture. But then the Cylons attacked, and now ... I'm a farmer? How is that fair? How is that in any way fair?" The dignity with which he says this last line... Sessa Abinell got to me, but this kid broke my heart. Just broke me, I'm serious. Chief motions Figurski over and they confab: "We make an exception for this guy, there's gonna be fifteen more right behind him." Chief points out how he's just a kid, but Figurski's not feeling him. Remember Pegasus. "Fine," Chief says. "Put him in the ship. Uh, look... this is just a temporary thing, okay?" Danny doesn't even hear him anymore. As the Marines drag him away, and Chief promises it's not permanent, Danny cries: "Uh, wait. Hold on. I am not a farmer. No, wait, can you just check my record? I...no, no, excuse me. Who am I supposed to talk to about this?" Imagine what it was like on New Caprica, when the civilian police came to your door; when the Centurions came bop-bop-boppin' up that bunny trail. "Is there somebody I'm supposed to talk to about this?" But there's nobody. "You don't understand. I'm not a farmer! Stop it! I'm not a farmer!" And then Danny Noon is gone, to the Daru Mozu. How is that in any way fair? How do you answer these questions?

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You don't. You do what you can. They take him away; Chief thinks about little Galen, little Nicky. He almost cries. His eyes, as he's fleeing the scene slowly, fall upon a book. Left on a stack of crates, photocopied: *My Triumphs, My Mistakes*, by Gaius Baltar. He opens it to a useful chapter: "The Emerging Aristocracy And The Emerging Underclass," and the text therein: "I wash my hands of the pho[ny] Democratic system; I will never let myself be distracted by the plac[at]ions of the elite..." Something about the falsehood of the Quorum and the various ministries; Chief makes the angry face and heads to the brig.

The last time they really spoke, disregarding the whole Resistance where the whole point was that they never saw each other, Gaius was torturing Chief -- maybe in this very room -- so that he'd answer the question nobody should have to ask. Now, Chief's powerless and Gaius is smoking one of his cigarettes. If Chief is the Body to Gaeta's Neural System, Galactica-wise, he



can't have ever respected him that much. Gaius talked Chief's girlfriend into suicide and put his wife in front of a firing line; now he's smoking a Swisher. "Your book. Fact or fiction?" Oh, Chief. I wish you knew the list of Roslin's lies. "She told me it hadn't gone out," Gaius purrs. "So, what do you make of it?" (Chief was only the head of the anti-Gaius contingent, both publicly -- in the union -- and secretly -- the Resistance. He has no reason not to fuck with him, frankly.) Chief says it's a pile of crap, but Gaius isn't so sure: "Obviously my analysis of a bifurcated society scares you, but everything in my book happens to be true." Just like the [birth rate](#), just like the [Eye of Jupiter](#). He always knows this stuff ahead of time. He's totally like Hannibal and Clarice in one, especially now, especially in a second. Chief's not buying that, per the book, Gaius was originally a farmboy from Aerolon. "Yes...as a matter of fact, I was born and raised on a dairy outside a town called Cuffle's Breath Wash [?] on Aerolon." Man, does Gaius make sense. I buy that entirely. Poor old idiot. Chief asks why it's so hard to picture him milking cows and shoveling manure, and though Gaius's explanation -- "lack of imagination?" -- is both true and full of panache, Chief's is equally valid: "Or maybe that your little tale is manure." Gaius blows him off. It's funny, you know. Adama, and at least two episodes of this show, are convinced that if Chief's going to hate anybody, it should rightly be Adama. And here he is, in a position actually literally opposite Adama's via Roslin's, and all the hate for NC is pointed right at my Gaius. It's getting lame, pointing out the freaky Baltar love, but come on: Chief and Gaius in a scene, and I'm on the fuckface's side? And Chief's about to be? This show is awesome. I wish Tigh would come and write a poem.

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Chief stumbles over his declaration that he's "known people from Aerolon"; I have no doubt that he's right, but he's not thinking about people from Aerolon proper, he's thinking about people who were very good at being from Aerolon, which is different. Although I don't blame him: the only reason I remember Boomer was fake-Aerolon is because she was my favorite character and I'm an Aries, so we are like soulmates. "I don't sound like I'm from Aerolon?" No, he doesn't. Mostly because he's the only British person on the cast, I suppose, so this whole conversation makes not a shitload of sense. On the other hand, it's awesome for many reasons. Number one is that if you buy it, and you should, Gaius

is even more of a Holly Golightly than you could have previously thought; secondly, Gaius is a particular kind of awesome that I am vulnerable to, being from West Texas and sounding like I'm from Sacramento (though you get a pass on the accent when you're outrageously gay, because apparently it overrides the other accents, or so I'm told by people with good intentions); thirdly, all that bitching about Callis's acting from the MKUltra episode is no longer an issue, because he does more with this short speech than he's been allowed to do in most episodes heretofore, and I always thought it was the script's fault anyway; and penultimately, because what few shots this show lacks being about hands, it more than makes up for by focusing on Gaius's mouth here, which gives the whole scene a shivery kind of magical prescience or whatever that's mesmerizing and terrifying for an unknown reason. Finally, and meta: since the last episode was about Espenson's food obsession, it's only fair that this one get a little linguistics porn in.

"Well, you know, I take that as a particular compliment. I don't know about you, but I've always found the Aeron dialect to be particularly hard on the ears. Something about the way the consonants scrape the back of the throat. Of course, I should know an awful lot about my native tongue, I spent hours on end trying to overcome it. Do you have any idea how hard it is for a ten-year-old boy to change the way he speaks, to unlearn everything he ever learned? So that one day, there might be the small hope that he might pass as not coming from Aeron? Maybe, I don't know...Caprica. Caprican. Oh, to be Caprican: seat of politics, culture, art, science...learning. And what was Aeron? Just a drab, ugly rock condemned to be the food basket for the Twelve Worlds. And that's how we were: treated like servants, like laborers, like the working class. [Galen Tyrol, CPO, the Chief, Geminese; his dirty hands.] You know, you'd have fitted right in there, Chief: Lots of men who liked to work with their hands, and, uh, grab a pint down at the pub, and finish off the evening with a good old-fashioned fight. Oh yes. I left Aeron after my eighteenth birthday. I turned my back on my family, on my heritage, all of them. Course, it doesn't matter, that. They're all dead now."

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Chief begs: "You do realize that none of that exists here?" and

Gaius laughs. "Coming from the mouth of a mechanic." Chief insists: "We've kept democracy. We have government, we have rights, we have elections..." Heh. Okay, even I would have laughed there. Everybody's so serious on this show all the time! "Well, then you should feel perfectly happy, shouldn't you? Perfectly at ease. Go home. Leave me in peace. After all, that's what the aristocracy wants. It wants the working class to feel looked after, while they scabble around for scraps from the master's table." Chief walks away. He's right. They're both right. What do you do? "Here's a question I ask at the end of my book; I'll save you the trouble of reading it: Do you honestly believe that the fleet will ever be commanded by somebody whose last name is not Adama? There it is, Chief. One set of rules for the aristocracy, and one set of rules for the rest of us." Code-switching like a motherfucker, going back and forth from the Aeron accent to his normal one, faster than you can hear almost: what's real? Who's on top? Who's on the bottom? Which is Gaius Baltar? Which is Laura Roslin, or Bill Adama? Which is the Chief? Which is you? Where do you fall? When do you fall? When does it start? What does it take?

Chief takes off. And the look in Gaius's eyes...it's holy. It's rage. There's something new, poking through. Think about Gaius, about what it took to become Gaius Baltar. Superstar, traitor, celebrity scientist. The kind of man Kara Thrace would fuck, or Felix Gaeta, just because of who he was. Think about Gaius Golightly, fucking Gina on a bed of death, knowing what she was, knowing he was about to lock the elections, about to settle a new planet for all mankind. Think about how hard he tried to prove himself, as Vice President, as President, and how burned he got, over and over and over. How every single person he asked for that one simple thing let him down: Laura, Kara, Caprica, Three. The thing that makes you awesome is the thing that makes you suck, and vice versa. The worse he gets the worse I feel for him: I've wanted to do a lot of things to Gaius Baltar, but I've never wanted to give him a hug before.

The PA's alive with the sounds of working, on Daru Mozu, on Galactica, cleanup crews working, Chief's on Daru talking to Fenner, all about the lottery and how it's going. "They're skittish, but they'll catch on." He points toward a point on the line where there was trouble before: "All kinds of gear slippage, temperature variation...we didn't know the dross wasn't getting burned off."

(I've been telling you that since "The Passage"!) Chief checks it out; Fenner points out half a dozen other places on the line that could still fuck up, so of course they do. The belt -- it's weirdly horrible, sickening after all this time with the hands and the factory, like something biological -- suddenly begins to jump and buck, tylium flying all over. It's gross; Chief yells to hit the switch, but his hands aren't dirty enough: "No, no, no, not when it's jammed. The whole system will seize up," shouts Fenner. And since it's fuel stuff, if the line stops the ore still in the chamber will superheat and blow everybody to hell. The time is now.

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Chief locates the area, and sticks his hands in the machine. Are they dirty enough? He's had too many algae meatloafs, I guess, because he can't fit in. And who should show up just in time, of course, but Danny Noon. Whose hands were meant for architecture. Whose beautiful hands were meant to create beauty, places for living, places where space speaks, where living and the line are in accordance. To work in math and lines so clear they're like looking through glass. To build cabins.

Danny sticks his hand in the machine, everybody yells at everybody else, it's really super intense, but at least Chief's not in danger. Hey, once they took Saul's eye, who knows? Not us, until they said Danny's name out loud -- that's how you know they're fracked -- and put him here, now, to do this. Everybody -- Chief, Fenner -- talks Danny through it, whatever the feldercarb is that he's working with. And it works, and the line gets going. And the tylium rolls. And when he pulls his arm out, it's ripped open by the machinery, and he begins to scream.

Seelix deals with my Danny, as everybody stares. Children. Chief. Fenner, talking loudly through it, and they lay the boy down upon the floor, his arm half gone, and Chief looks at him, and looks at Seelix, and looks at Xeno Fenner. Chief thinks about machines, and people, and war, and mutiny, and how solving problems is not the same as keeping them alive. And Chief stands up, as Seelix is shouting for gauze, and he meets Fenner's eyes -- it only takes one look -- and the two of them make their way down the line. Down past the belt, and the smelter, and the engine, and the motor, and the fire, and the sparks, and the ore, and everybody watches, stares. And Galen Tyrol looks at the lever,

and at Fenner, and he does the math.

Xeno's Paradoxes are twofold: the second paradox ("You Cannot Even Start") illustrates how if a Geminon wants to reach a Caprican freighter, even if it's stationary, he has to go half the way; before he gets half the way, he must go a quarter; but first, one-eighth; but before then, a sixteenth. The first states that if you have a Caprican and a Geminon, the Geminon has to take a certain amount of time to reach the place where the Caprican already was. In this time, the Caprican has moved forward: the Geminon has to break that glass ceiling and move forward again. Whenever Achilles reaches a place the tortoise has been, even over generations, he still has farther to go. (Even though it's shitty to call the estate tax "the death tax," that doesn't change the essential shittiness of not having an estate tax at all, because money is changing hands whether it's earned or not; graduate education is the secret magic hacker codes of the world that rich white men hand down to their rich white sons, along with their money, and everybody else can suck it.)

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Chief pulls the levers back, at the head of the line, and the line stops. He hops up jauntily on a hatch ladder, swinging like Curious George, like a member of the Miserables chorus, like a perfect idiot, and calls out: "This plant is off-line! We're on strike!" A thousand dirty hands raise into the air, pound against the belt, against the line, and into the air again.

Back on Galactica , the deckhands are having a great old time, playing cards and giggling, as a grip of Pilots come storming down the stairs, ready for bullshit. At their point is Starbuck, making a face that can only be described as scary as shit. Pollux -- looking like Cally's white-trash aunt who's actually just a couple of years older than Cally, and they gossip about the family on their breaks, only probably their families are dead so the metaphor kind of falls apart, but you know they smoke cigarettes -- looks up from her game, all, "Need somethin', Captain?" Now, I can barely even remember who Kara is at this point, but I know you don't fucking talk to her like that. I was reading the old recaps the other day, and I was kind of horribly surprised by this whole speech about her during the Occupation, how she had to be in Leoben Stir because otherwise she would rock out so

hardcore nobody would survive and the Occupation would never have happened. I can barely remember loving her that much. (This episode helps.) So she's like, "Fucking A?" And Pollux, not without grace, apologizes that they're on "vital missions only" and that they've sent the CAP out, so they've done it. Racetrack asks what the hell she means, and Pollux admits that Chief, via Cally, has put them on strike. And I know it's kind of lame and story-ordered, but damn if I didn't cheer right then too, thanks to little Danny Noon. He's like my new Billy, I might be bringing him up without warning for years now.

Chief is escorted down a corridor by Marines, walking past lots of people: deck hands surely, maybe pilots, proud and beautiful Cally, holding their son. In the brig, soon enough, he's visited by the Admiral, and he stands, bummed to even be having this conversation. "Are you aware that your deck gang is participating in a work stoppage?" Chief corrects him: it's called a general strike. He's right. "It's a mutiny. And do you know what we do with mutineers? We shoot them, Chief." He's right too. Commercial.

Chief: "We're leaving people behind, Admiral. People are locked into their jobs, they have no control over their lives, they have no say. We're abandoning them to their fate." He compares it to Ajaxing them on some planet like Bulldog. Not the point. You know, it's funny, because I have had to do so many wild backbends but the end result is still this: no matter who the guys on top are, or the guys on the bottom, you don't put guns in the

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Temple. And what everybody but Chief -- but including Gaius -- is saying is that we're back there. Three and Cavil and Doral keeping order looks a lot like this; Cain is about to get a shoutout in a major way. "That is not the issue. The men and women on this ship are not allowed to disobey an order, especially in support of some kind of frackin' labor dispute." Chief points out that they've launched CAP and nobody's abandoned their post, so technically nobody's in danger, assuming the Cylons don't show up after 49+ days, which is pretty much what happened after the Resurrection Ship. Adama defines this correctly as mutiny, and: "It stops now." Chief says all he's looking for is a sit-down with Roslin; Adama goes him one better and grabs the phone without speaking to Chief. "This is the Admiral. Arrest Cally Tyrol. Take her, under armed guard, directly to the starboard repair bay." He hangs up; Chief asks what the frack he's doing. "I'm gonna put her up against the bulkhead, and I'm gonna shoot her, as a mutineer." Tell me the difference.

"Are you out of your frackin' mind? Cally was just following my orders!" Adama says this makes her a ringleader, so she'll go



first. "And then the rest of your dead gang: Figurski, Seelix, Pollux..." Chief slams the bars of his cell, still not getting the stakes here: "You won't do this. We have a son." Adama speaks the truth. "Understand me. The very survival of this ship may depend on someone getting an order that they don't want to do. And if they hesitate, if they feel that orders are sometimes optional, then this ship will perish. And so will your son. And the entire human race." All this unfinished business. All the chances and the impossible choices. "I don't want to do this, Chief. But I will put ten Callys up against the wall, to make sure that this ship and this Fleet are not destroyed." Chief stares at him, and makes the same informed decision that Laura did earlier. He's right; it makes sense. "Fine. I'll call it off." Adama gets Cally on the phone, and summons Chief out of his cell.

"You okay?" Don't worry about me, Cally says. "I've been to the brig before." (Don't, um, mention that you've been in the brig for murdering your husband's ex-girlfriend, in real life? Just FYI.)

"Everything's okay. Call off the strike." She asks if they caved; she thinks that's what this about. He takes the shortcut, the Lie Of Earth shortcut, and says they did. Whatever keeps you alive. They didn't, they won't, they can't. Whatever keeps you alive. She accepts this, even though it's self-evident that they haven't, and they can't. "I'll take care of it. Galen, I'm proud of you." He tells his wife, like a child, to give the phone to the Marine, and hands off to Adama, who orders her released. Something in Chief's demeanor gave him what he needed: "You can go now, Chief. I thought you had something that you wanted to discuss with the President?" They keep going further. I miss the Cylons.

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On Colonial One, Roslin offers the Chief another in a series of drinks; he declines. "Madame President, I've seen people drafted into service based purely on where they were born." She [Friday Night Lights](#)es that they're selected on their skills, and he points out that this is the same thing. "Capricans are more likely to be professionals, Aerelons are more likely to be farmers. It's a fact of life." So? "It's a fact I can't change," she nods. "True. But I think we can level the playing field." And before we roll our eyes, let's hear him out. This is a particular world with particular concerns, namely that the population is severely limited and the last thing they need are Colonial designations at all: I say give 'em true representative democracy and let them all be humans. "There are a lot of dirty jobs that need to be done every day in this Fleet:

Cleaning, hauling, low-level maintenance, things like that. These are the kind of jobs that I think should be allocated to people who..." He's so dirty; one of the cool things about this episode is how motherfrackin' dirty he looks at this point. "Well. People like yourself. No offense." She smiles with all the Roslin she's got left, and she means it: "None taken. Go ahead," she says, like your boss's boss. "Let some of the people on Colonial One get their hands dirty for a change." Um, other than the blood of New Caprica? The thousands of detained and broken and killed? Apocalypses are relative. I've never thought it was necessary to bring Laura down in order to prove a point. That line is silly. "Done," she says. "What else?"

"People that are in dangerous and high-stress jobs need to be rotated out, for R&R. And in order to do that, we need a formal training program." Again, the Lie Of Earth. I love it. Even Roslin's like, "We can talk about a training program later, but right now, we need to focus on maintaining the workforce that we have. And this is gonna have to be area where the union gives ground." He cocks his head. "Oh, I'm sorry," she says. And you know, it's that "oh, I'm sorry" that makes me suspicious. She's learned how you play them. Not as Cain, lining them up, and not as Adama, hugging them and tearing off after them whenever they freak out. Actually play them. Actually give them exactly what they want, like Zarek and Gaius know how to do: everything they want, in the worst way possible. If I give you this, will you shut up? No? How about this?

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"Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were engaged in collective bargaining on behalf of the Colonial Worker's Alliance. If that's not the case, then..." Chief protests that the union died on New Caprica, as though her cynical wording weren't enough of a red flag, and that music starts to play in case you were thinking this was legit. "Chief, the workers in this Fleet, they need someone to represent them in their interests. And if this society is becoming truly polarized between an entrenched political class and a disenfranchised underclass, we are doomed." Just in case he's been reading that damned book. "We won't need the Cylons to destroy us, we'll destroy ourselves. The Fleet that arrives at Earth will not represent Colonial society at all. I am willing to fight for that society until my dying breath. I would love it if you would

fight for that society as well." Which is dumb on many levels, number one being that you don't have to preserve the horrible judgments and prejudices of "Colonial society" with these numbers: you become something new. She should protect the things that matter: humanity, the numbers obviously, but after that, the things that make us human. Law, faith, all those things that are hard to talk about. All the big stuff. Chief's eyes go lovely and dreamy: "Hmm," he nods. "I will. I will, Madame President. I will." I didn't want to bring up useful idiots with Cally, because I thought I'd get more hate mail about Cally, but: useful idiot. Unions are the same thing as communism, on a manageable level, but don't ever think you're being handed something. She just gave him hush money, but the money is imaginary and useless. "Congratulations on being so much of a pain in our ass that we threatened to shoot your wife. That's how we do. How about that becomes your job?"

Down in the hangar bay, Chief's calling out job orders, on another day. He doesn't give Seelix any orders; Starbuck arrives. "Chief Tyrol?" The last time they spoke, I think, she was opting out of the Circle, which included him not very enthusiastically, and Seelix very much enthusiastically. Chief's friendly with her, but she goes into "nugget"/"you can call me God" mode, and yells at Chief about how one of her nuggets failed to show up for basic flight instruction this morning. Chief's in on it: "I'm sorry to hear that, Captain." Starbuck, our Artemis, asks if he knows where the frack Diana Seelix is, and he calls her up, front and center. She hops right the hell up, and Kara yells at her: "Flight instruction began twenty minutes ago, Seelix! You wanna be a pilot, or not?" Seelix stutters, and Starbuck yells some more, and it's awesome, because we've all seen this scene a hundred times, but not on this show and not with these people, which equals heartwarming. "You will think when I tell you to think, nugget! And you might want to look at the plan of the day, because then maybe you'd know where you're supposed to be! And you might actually get there on time!" They face off; Seelix is beautiful. "And you're out of uniform!" Chief offers to help. Oh, man. I don't know what my deal is. I hate Seelix, and I hate this whole class issue and the deck hands and whatever, aspiration, but this like broke my heart with joy. I have a high need for approval -- so it's awesome how Chief is in on this the whole time -- but a correspondingly high hatred of authority-- so fucking stop yelling at me, idiot -- so

scenes like this don't usually get to me. Anyway, Chief pulls out an ensign's pin, to put her in uniform. Seelix thanks him sweetly as he passes his clipboard off to Kara in order to pin Seelix: "You have to be an officer to fly a Viper, you know that." He turns to the deck hands: "Detail! And salute!"

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Same music, lovely. She's gorgeous and strong. They all salute her. He salutes her. It's so weird to see NCOs doing this stuff because we never see it. Seelix thanks him over and over, a hundred times, and he congratulates her, calling her Ensign. "All right," shouts Starbuck, "This is all very touching, but you were supposed to be in Ready Room Four twenty minutes ago, Ensign! Which means that you are falling behind on your first day! So move it! Don't look at him. Move it! Move it!" Seelix heads out, and Starbuck grins at Chief, as the other deck hands laugh. "Be nice," he says. She snorts sweetly, indicating somehow, because she rocks, that she loves both Chief and Seelix, and that being an asshole is her favorite part of the job. And then in the foreground, there's Diana Seelix, heading off to Ready Room Four, giant smile on her face, proud and beautiful.

Next week: I'm so unspoiled that I'm making Joe R do the recaplet, but there's a shot in the preview that looks like, thanks to her going crazy, we'll get to see Kara, inside a Viper, inside her fake scary Leoben apartment, inside the Detention Center. So awesome, so awful, so possible that she'll finally break Lee for good, see you then. Boom boom boom!

# THE GIRL KNEELING BY THE RIVER

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 17 | Aired on 03.03.2007

*Maelstrom* - Kara clears things up with Leoben, the Eye of Jupiter, Lee, Bill, and basically everybody but the Chief. Then she kills herself.

**Recaplet:** I can't believe I'm supposed to recaplet this. Okay, so Kara's been dreaming about painting the Eye of Jupiter on the wall of her Caprican apartment (and then having sex with Leoben soon thereafter) every night since Helo showed her that image from the Temple. So Helo tells her to go see an Oracle, who ends up repeating what Leoben told Kara about her mother in "[Flesh and Bone](#)," and says Leoben's coming for her. With the fleet on a refueling jaunt on a blue-sky planet, Kara spots a phantom Raider and chases it down, only no one else sees it or believes it's there. Adama and Son discuss benching her for being crazy, but Lee declines, even though she's wiggier than normal and seeing Eyes of Jupiter in her corn flakes and Kacey's reflection in mirrors and such. She also spends the whole episode giving Adama a figurine of Aurora to remember her by, and telling Lee where to put her photo when she dies, and finally letting Lee go, romantically speaking. So you know this is all going to suck real soon. Back on the planet, this time with Lee on her wing, Kara spots yet another phantom Raider and chases it down once again, this time getting knocked on the cockpit by whatever-it-is and into Mystical Leoben Dreamworld. And he takes her into her past, where we see her awful mother didn't let something like having terminal cancer keep her from emotionally abusing her daughter. And then Not Really Leoben takes Kara to her mother's deathbed, where she can finally let it all go and make her peace and not be afraid anymore and whatnot. Which comes in handy, because Kara's still tailspinning, and Lee's chasing her, and she tells him it's okay and "I'll see you on the other side" and "they're waiting for me," and then her viper completely explodes, and there's no 'chute, and Kara Thrace just really and truly died. No dreams, no cheats, no last-second shot of her stirring on the planet's surface. Just a whole lot of stunned faces in CIC and one big crying heap of Bill Adama. So long, Starbuck. I really, really, really hope you turn out to be a Cylon.

**Recap:** Previously, Leoben was a very clever Cylon, in addition to being a nutjob. Kara beat him up super-bad but prayed for him

when he died; later, he kidnapped her and kept her in an apartment and made her super-duper crazy. Which she kind of already was, because her mom was not a nice lady, but it certainly didn't help. Also: all of this has happened before, and all of it will happen again. In the apartment, he swore that he was just trying to show her "the truth of her life," and the reasons she suffered and struggled and acted like a world-class a-hole a lot of the time. Everybody was talking about this mysterious destiny of hers, but nothing was really going on with it, even after the Temple of Five proved to be a monument to her doodles. Then we kind of forgot about her altogether so we could concentrate on labor laws. The previouslies end on [her conversation with Helo](#) about how the Eye of Jupiter in the Temple was the same one he saw in [her apartment in Delphi](#). (That last link is to the episode titled "Valley Of Darkness." No fear.)

Previous to that, a girl got kidnapped on the coast of Sicily; she was taken away by a dark spirit, into the underworld, where she became a woman. If her mother had known what was going to happen -- if she'd know that this was her fate, that it keeps the world turning -- who knows what she would have done differently? Sometimes it's better to just close your eyes, especially when the Gods are involved. The girl's name was Persephone, or Proserpina, or a thousand other names; we'll call her "Kore" now. It means "daughter." What is your name? Maybe last time, she was the interrogator and he was the prisoner. The players change, the story remains the same. He kept her down there, and it changed her. Maybe he told her she had a beautiful daughter, perhaps. With a name like Kore, or Kat. Or Kara. Homer called what she became down there the Iron Queen, and she only relented once. Empedocles called her water: "Now hear the fourfold roots of everything: Enlivening Hera, Hades, shining Zeus. And Nestis, moistening mortal springs with tears." Elysium, where the dead and burnt-out wraiths of mortals make their home, comes from the word for a person struck by lightning: enelysion. It's where you go when you're a hero and you've reached your end of line; it's the place Persephone rules. It's encircled by the stream Oceanus, which goes around and around, and never ends.

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Kara Thrace's eyes are going wild in her rack as she dreams, breathing heavily. There are flashes of the mandala, the Eye of



Jupiter; there's a paintbrush and white paint. You already know what she's doing: you watched Boomer do it up until the second she shot the Admiral and couldn't pretend any more. Kara's in her apartment, in dead and burnt-out Delphi, in panties and a man's shirt, painting over her painting of the Eye. To the left of it there's a poem, as we've seen before: "Methodically smoking my cigarette / With every breath I breathe out the day / With every delicious sip I drink away the night..." There's only the sound of her labored breathing as she paints over the Eye, first with the brush and then in great gouts and splashes. Leoben comes to her, taking her from behind, and her breath begins to strive for something else. He turns her around, kissing her; back on Galactica she's moving. He pulls her shirt open and holds her hands against the wall, with paint all over them both; they're on the floor, covered in paint. His shirt disappears, and still the breath. One and zero, recombining. It was never about wanting him and not wanting to want him: it was knowing she wanted him, and being unable to reconcile that with the person she had agreed to be. Over his shoulder, the Eye, as the paint disappears; as she comes. Her eyes snap open in her rack; she blinks a hundred times and tries to keep it quiet, to get her breath under control, to pretend she's asleep. Hotdog, looking fabulous, is grinning down, fascinated and turned on: "What's up?" She rolls her eyes. Kara Thrace has eyes. "Nothing. Go to sleep."

Starbuck splashes water on her face, like white paint, to chase away the dreams; she's gasping as Helo walks into the head. He's awake because he has a daughter of his own. If he knew what was going to happen -- if he knew his daughter's fate -- what would he do differently? Sometimes it's better to just close your eyes: to the storm, to the shape of things to come. "Hera gets these nightmares, wakes up crying and shaking. By the time we calm her down and get her back to sleep, I'm wide awake. All that crap she went through on New Caprica really left its mark on her." Not to mention her Basestar misadventures, and getting her blood kidnapped, and being stolen back and forth by the cast a hundred times. "Yeah, I know just how she feels," says Kara. She does. She sighs about the mandala, admitting that she dreams about it, and "that bastard Leoben," every night. I feel like I'm losing my mind here. Helo tells her to see the psychiatrist aboard Incron Vale; they've already made an appointment for Hera, who though she seems never to age is apparently ready for the

talking cure. Meanwhile Nicky's like 80 pounds even. Starbuck scoffs and he suggests instead that she check out the Oracle camped at Dogsville; Kara sees a child -- not Kacey, another girl; we'll call her Kore -- who appears, broken and bleeding, and disappears. Because it's Kara, she doesn't revisit the psychiatry idea from a second ago. "She interprets dreams," Helo says, like Kara's not the most religious person on the ship. "Sees things in them. Predicts events." She brushes her teeth and when he asks if she's okay, she smiles that smile she smiles and admits she doesn't know.

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(Tennyson: "Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals / From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure, / And bosom beating with a heart renewed. / Thy cheek begins to redden through the gloom, / Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine, / Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team / Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise, / And shake the darkness from their loosened manes, / And beat the twilight into flakes of a fire." It's from Tithonus, a poem he wrote about one of Aurora's lovers. Would you know I was fucking with you if I said "the other side of Thrace is also Thrace"? That's comedy, come on.)

Kara enters the Oracle's tent, and calls out; on an altar she sees a goddess, cast in gold: they've taken away her hands, and replaced them with wings. Kara Thrace has hands. Six years ago they gave her wings. Yolanda Brenna, who has an old-world face, appears, one eye obscured as she peeks around a wall. With one eye on Kara, she almost smiles: "The goddess Aurora. Take it, it's yours." (This was supposed to be [Selloi](#) again, but the schedule didn't work out.) "What the hell am I gonna do with this?" She'll know, when it's time. Brenna holds out her hands, asking Kara to sit. Kara kneels across an altar from the woman, a huge ceremonial bowl between them, filled with water. With the sound of dripping, with the lights playing across the water and onto their faces, you'd think we were in the presence of [the Hybrid](#). Or on an [MKULtra trip](#), or in the [Temple of Five](#), or sitting with [Boomer, listening to the water](#). Maybe last time, Kara was the interrogator and someone else was the prisoner. The players change, the story remains the same: it's not just Gaius's trial, and it never was. She takes the Oracle's hands.

"I, uh," she falters. "Uh...I can't sleep. I have these nightmares." Brenna doesn't look away, at least not in a way you could tell. "About the Cylon? The one who held you captive on New Caprica. Leoben." Starbuck swears he was just fucking with her; Brenna shakes her head. So gentle, even in her harshness. "He knows you better than you know yourself, Kara Thrace. He sees the truth about you. About your destiny." Starbuck pulls back; the Oracle's too strong, she can't get her hands free. There's a door about to slam. "Enough of that. The only destiny I have is as a world-class frak-up." Brenna almost smiles, again: "Who hurts everyone she cares about. That was your mother's gift to you, wasn't it? You were born to a woman who believed suffering was good for the soul, so you suffered." We've heard all these words before; we're hearing them again. Her voice and Leoben's begin to meld; how he was on the floor, talking, refusing to be quieted, when she was the interrogator. "Your life is a testament to pain. You want to believe it, because it means that you're bad luck. You're like a cancer that needs to be removed, because you hear her voice every day." Adama called her that once, too, and he loves her more than anyone; never more than when he said that. "And you want her to be right," says Leoben; back in the tent, Kara Thrace's eyes narrow. "Somebody told you what Leoben said to me?" A droplet runs down Brenna's cheek, like a tear. Like the rain. "Did you ever tell anyone about that? You learned the wrong lesson from your mother, Kara. You confused the messenger with the message." The Greek word for messenger is *aggelos*. We have a history of getting these messages confused. Six years ago, Kara ripped her wings from her mother's hands and ran, and ran, and ran, and she never looked back. "Your mother was trying to teach you something else," Brenna says, and Kara gets confused again: "You don't know crap about my mother." But Leoben does: "He sees the patterns, how it all fits together." The little girl Kore cries. Starbuck speaks harshly enough to shut her up, and Brenna too, but the Oracle doesn't blink, with her eyes. "He's coming for you. Soon." Somewhere a door slams, on a young girl's hands, breaking every finger, between the first and second knuckle. Kara's trial begins again. Kara tells her to fuck off and leaves; the water plays across Brenna's beautiful face, her eyes: "You can't stop him. And he will show you the way."

We write our own destiny, sure: that doesn't mean you can't see it coming, like a huge wave on the ocean. Everything that happens in this story is fate, unfolding out of itself. If you were to see somebody realize they already know everything that's about to happen, it would look like time moving forward. It would look like this. The wooden dialogue actually adds to the effect: every "realization" Kara has, moving forward on the tide, is just another level of acceptance. She'll get you between the eyes with it, in the end; but think about it, like hearing a sound across the ocean, getting closer. Like hearing Chip Six declare herself an angel a thousand times before you can admit the possibility. If she could admit was going to happen -- if she knew her fate, consciously, and how it keeps the world turning -- who knows what she'd do differently? Sometimes it's better to just close your eyes, especially when the Gods are involved. God has very bad manners most of the time, but this is one thing you can count on: nothing you can't handle until precisely the point that you can handle it. Until the bugs stop jumping and you realize there was never anything to be scared of, after all. This is how change works, all change: it feels like dying because it is.

Credits. 41,000 souls in the Fleet, for now. Sam's leaving after a booty call, zipping up at the side of Starbuck's rack, asking her to come away with him, for just a little while; she calls it tempting and he promises not to talk about their relationship. "I'll think about it," she says, and he knows that means no. "I hate to say this, but that whackjob Oracle, she's got a point. Your mother fracked up your head long before Leoben ever got to you." (PS: Your wife's status as a survivor of child abuse, abduction, and multiple rape? Not on the table for a fight that's basically about how she won't hang out with you. Just FYI.) She plays with the Aurora fetish, turning it in her hands, thinking about her mother. Acting a little out of character, diverging from the stream of this scene, a scene they must've played out a thousand times, takes a sudden turn. Kara turns sympathetic: "She was dealing with a lot, Sam." The message was this: that Kara was different from other kids, that she needed to be a warrior, like her mom. That fear gets you killed, and anger keeps you alive. The message was confused; the messenger was human. You can't trust us. "Well, she gave you plenty to be angry about, didn't she? Split your head open with a broomstick handle because you didn't make your bed?" Kara offers a little story, which happens to contain the

key to this episode, and to...pretty much everything. (I'll tell you another story in a second that's the same, but funnier.) During the first Cylon war, Kara's mom (whose name, since "Gaia" and its brothers and derivatives are taken, was Socrata, which...) was stationed with the Fleet Marines on a jungle planet, and hated bugs as a result. Serious phobia. So Little Kara buys a bunch of rubber bugs, and leaves them all over Corporal Thrace's shoes. And Socrata screamed, and tried to smash them with her shoes, but it just made them jump around more.

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... Guy gets on a train with a box, airholes in the side. The man he sits down next to asks him about it, and he admits that he's got a mongoose in there. Dude B is like, "Not something normal, like a bunny or a cat?" No, there's more to the story. "It's because of my older brother. He's a drunk, among other things, and at this point he's just completely out of his tree. He sees serpents, everywhere. Everywhere he looks, he's seeing these snakes and they make him terrified." And Dude B is like, "So they're imaginary?" Yeah. "So then why the mongoose?" And the first guy smiles and looks very meaningfully at the box, which is empty. "Imaginary mongoose."

In every house there's a little room we don't know about. And inside that room, there are insects and darkness and the sound of scratching, and a hot red heat at the back of your eyes. And a lot of us don't ever open the door, so we're surprised when the monsters in that room take us down. In the apartment on Delphi it was hidden behind the Eye of Jupiter and a poem about Socrata, and sex, and death. On Galactica they call it the brig. On the Pegasus they put up a sign: "Please Disturb." But if you open the door, and step inside, you'll find that they're just...well, we'll get there. The truth would only scare you. For now, remember: if you pretend that door's not there, it's going to open by itself, and if you're not ready when the door opens, you can do some fucking horrible things to the people you should love most. Like your kids. Or yourself: "You must have caught hell for that," Anders says, and her voice is pretty light: "She grabbed my hand, held it in the doorjamb and slammed the door." Anders curses; Starbuck smiles: "It was worth it, though." It was an imaginary mongoose: always worth it. Human psychology is based on projection.

Hotdog and Starbuck flying CAP on day four of a refueling mission that keeps fracking up with the valve failures and whatnot, down near a blue-sky planet with "synchrotron radiation," which of course we all know what that is, so whatever. Realizing they're going to be out there for hours, Hotdog starts namesaking around, flying upside down and doing whirligigs and I don't know, loop-de-loops. Frotsnoozes. He laughs and admits that the sky is like the only thing he misses about New Caprica. Even just a dip in the upper part of the atmosphere makes him happy, and that makes me happy. It makes Kara happy too, until she spots a Raider flying across the sky, at an angle not unlike that of the day she said she'd fight until she couldn't anymore.

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"Galactica, Starbuck. Showtime. Bogey, my right-one. In the soup at 45. Committing." Hotdog radios that there's no such bogey, and they say pilot things like "press" and "wilco," and Adama takes her at her word, aborting the unrep (?) and getting everybody ready to jump. Dualla takes the flight school vocab section of the quiz a tad far when she issues the order to "cease all underway replenish ops." If this whole part of the episode weren't like that, hyperactive with the shoving of these words in all over the place like an episode of [ER](#) in the sky, I'd call her an asshole. Gaeta can see Starbuck and Hotdog on dradis, but not the Raider, and Tigh and Adama talk about how being able to hide from Cylons with the atom stuff happening also means that the Cylons can hide from them. Which you'd think would be self-evident, but Season Three is pretty much based on that principle, and I think the whole show. Starbuck tells the CAG about the Raider in some kind of obvious diner code that Tigh fully translates for us, like even he is irritated by the script at this point, and how it seems to be peeing its name in the snow suddenly: "One heavy Raider, no fighter escort." Which is still not on dradis; Tigh joins Adama in believing Starbuck versus the evidence of his own eyes. I mean, "eye." "Alert the Fleet to stand by for an emergency jump," says Adama, and down in the clouds, diving further toward the planet, Hotdog's blind: no visual on Starbuck, no visual on anything. Nothing but the rain.

As Starbuck drops down through the clouds, she sees a mighty storm, twisting around and around, never ending: the Eye of Jupiter, again. Her jaw drops; lightning plays across the storm



below. It takes Lee's voice to wake her up, as usual: "Do you have visual?" She looks away from the Eye, and calls out the position to her CAG; she shoots and dives down toward the Raider, who shoots and scores. Alarms begin to sound, like a noise coming across the water, like a sonic boom for something that hasn't hit yet. "Took a hit. Still flying." She got her wings six years ago. Adama searches for the Raider; Gaeta notes Starbuck's velocity, her angle of approach, her descent: she's getting close to the planetary hard deck (sigh) and if she goes down too far, if she stays on course, the atmospheric density will keep her from reaching orbit again. The word is trajectory: if Boomer was always meant to die on the floor of Hera's nursery, if we did that to her, wasn't that just fate, opening like a flower? Isn't this the trajectory Kara's always been looking for: if she goes down too far, she'll be crushed, and Tigh grumbles that this will occur "like a cheap soda can," because apparently he drinks really expensive soda? Which is not a thing that I knew to exist?

Starbuck ignores Apollo as he screams, shooting down into the storm, into the Eye, and his voice climbs higher and higher. It's nothing he hasn't been saying to her since they met; nothing he doesn't scream every time they have a conversation: "Starbuck, you're getting too low. Break off and climb. I repeat, Starbuck, you're getting too low, break off and climb!" Out the Viper window as she drops into the Eye, there's a man, indistinct, in Elysium, in a white room, illuminated by lightning as it flashes and disappears again. "Starbuck, get out of there. Starbuck, come in. Can you read? Starbuck, you're getting too low. Break off and climb! Get up!" I mean to say that Lee Adama begs her to climb, and she willfully ignores him, drawn forward by music across the water. "Hotdog, do you have a visual on Starbuck? Starbuck, come in. Do you read? Starbuck, pull out! That is an order. Pull out!" (That's what she said!) Kara snaps out of it, and climbs briefly, dipping down once again as she sees the bogey, teasing her away, into the darkest parts of the storm, a will o' wisp, an angel. And still the breathing, and the rain, as she strives further, and pulls away.

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"Where'd I take the hits, Chief?" Chief is sorry to admit that she took them nowhere at all: she heard the crash, felt the impact, sounded the alarm, took it on the chin. It was just the bugs

jumping; it's fear that gets you killed. "What? I felt the impact. Damn Viper felt like I hit a brick wall!" He promises to keep checking, but the funny thing about getting shot at is that you can often tell just by looking with your eyeballs. In the "bonus" scene, which are hilarious in how much they piss people off with the whole being-worthless thing, and I swear it's gotta be a SciFi issue, like they think they'll somehow fool people into thinking they're getting some kind of special thing they'd be getting if they had the internet, or something. I don't know who's watching SciFi that doesn't have the internet and/or could possibly feel like they were winning something awesome with this strategy, but I also know that everybody hates the bonus scenes, and that's funny. So in the bonus scene, Kara wigs the frack out on Chief after discovering a little hydraulic fluid leak, because the seals are so old, just like on Daru Mozu, and she bitches at him about drinking "moonshine" in the Tool Room, and how meanwhile she'll be up in her "bird" and that if some gear "buckles" when she "traps," then something impenetrable and very, very masculine-sounding will happen. In a case of bonus scene mimicking art, we cut to footage of Weddle & Thompson as young men, doodling in their notebooks in elementary school, guns and bombs and a robot with guns for arms shooting a plane made out of guns that fires guns, because we get it, we get it, we get it! Wilco or whatever! Words!

Later, in the briefing room, they're watching Starbuck's gun camera, which reveals a whole lot of nothing where a Heavy Raider's supposed to be. Athena's finally like, "We watched it twice already," but since she's classy she doesn't mention her robot eyeballs that are telling her in 1080p that there is no Heavy Raider. Starbuck says it must not be her gun camera film, but Athena points out that nobody else "pulled trigger" all day. And again: she refrains from saying that this was because there were no Cylons around to shoot at. Also the Raptor's dradis and Galactica's match up. Also no robots were around to show up on dradis. Starbuck snits at him that dradis is "wonky" near the planet, Karl, and Hotdog and Sharon are like, "Here we go." Apollo rushes in to say that maybe the Raider jumped away before she opened fire, which I guess is a clue about how the gun cameras work, and Racetrack isn't letting them off that easy: "Or maybe it never existed to begin with." What!? It totally didn't! Imaginary mongoose!

Bill asks his son if he's going to ground Kara, and Lee exposit Cottle's professional opinion that she is both physically fit but an emotional basket case. For fifty episodes running, this has been true. (Fucking FIFTY? Is that for real? Did I just forget how to count or do simple math? That is AWESOME!) "In peacetime, he'd ground us all," Lee says, and you know he's right. Bill gently makes it very damned clear that this is Lee's call, and Lee expresses that this is difficult, because...some dialogue I don't want to deal with. It's like being welcomed to your own home by a guest at your party: they mean well, but they're still behaving foolishly. So I guess now is the point where the show reveals that Kara's identity as a "steely-eyed Viper jock," okay, is like all that's keeping her together. For fifty episodes this has been true. This is the point of her entire fucking character but suddenly we're too stupid? So the show merrily explains the most basic of shit for a minute, and then all of a sudden: ellipsis. If Lee grounds her, then what will happen? We're too dumb to figure it out on our own, and the show's not telling. The Adamas drink and wonder if she's crazy enough to be grounded, even though for at least the fifth time, Kara Thrace's personal craziness has interrupted a major Fleet op at its most vulnerable point, and for at least the billionth time, Bill Adama thinks that's awesome. Also awesome: explaining more basic shit. "The bottom line," he bottom-lines it for us, "is when the bullets start to fly, can she handle it?"

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Whatever, stupid scene. I usually like Bill and Lee together, but that was awful. Bleep-bloop to the Wall of Remembrance, where Starbuck is sitting against the wall, across from Kat's picture. (Over her left shoulder is a photograph, of a pale horse; I can't see the guy that's sitting on him, but I'm pretty sure I know his name.) She's talking about death when Lee joins her. "So where do you want to go when you bite the big one? I wanna go right there, next to Kat." Apollo calls her a "water-walking Viper jock," and Kara mercifully ignores that one, but then pulls one of her own. "Royal pain in the ass, but a hell of a stick to have on your wing." Lee points: "You can put me right here, next to Duck and Nora. Good card players. Nice way to spend eternity." In hell? They agree to make sure to get the pictures in the right places, even if they're the wrong places. Kat's so pretty. Starbuck smiles sadly. "So what did the old man have to say about my combat report? Starbuck's finally gone off the deep end? Unfit for duty?"

He said, correctly, that it's Lee's call. Because he's the CAG, not to mention that Bill doesn't ever seem to have been capable of making that call, where Kara's concerned. "Ah," she says. He looks down, and she swallows: "And what do you say?" That he trusts Kara Thrace's eyes over dradis any day of the week. She knows he shouldn't. "So you don't think I'm nuts?" He grins wryly; he's so cute in 3.5 it's unbelievable. "I didn't say that. You're a raving lunatic, as demented and deranged as the first day I met you." And you're a bastard, she says, and they laugh. The candles in the Hall are dripping like rain, like the water on a Basestar; like the tent in Dogsville. "Look, um. Stress has made us all twitchy. After what that Cylon put you through on New Caprica you've had more than your share." The wax from a yellow candle, and a blue, and a red, dripping down onto the deck. Forming the Eye. "Get some rest. Or you will start seeing things." She nearly weeps, but smiles instead.

So I didn't really think she was going to die until this part. Laura and Bill are walking down a corridor, discussing the refuel: another ten hours, and we're done. We can move on. Starbuck heads up the steps at the junction; as Bill calls her name the lights go out, all around her, leaving that section in darkness. My stomach flipped over; she didn't even notice. "Starbuck? What do you hear?" **Nothing but the rain.** "Well then, grab your gun and bring in the cat." Boom boom boom; Katee Sackhoff described her state after reading the script as, quote, "blown away." She wilcos the Admiral, and greets the President, telling her there's a hell of a view out there. "We're almost to the finish line, then we can jump the hell out of this system," says Adama, and "So say we all," says Kara. She turns to go, then comes back. "Um. actually, sorry. Boss, I have something for you." The goddess Aurora. They took her hands and replaced them with wings. "I thought that it would be a nice figurehead for your **model ship.**" The one he was working on when Dualla explained to him the line of salt we cross when children are separated from their parents. When mothers lose their daughters, when fathers are cut off from their sons. When fathers lose their daughters. "Aurora. Goddess of the dawn." Yeah, Kara says. "Brings the morning star and a fair wind. A fresh start." Aurora: light, and wind. He thanks her, worried: "Good hunting," he says, and she's bashful. Bashful, as she thanks him, and runs off. He holds the figure up for Laura as they continue off down the hall.

Starbuck's checking her harness with the Chief, lots and lots of words, a robot with guns for arms, the whole bit, and then: a little girl, sitting in the cockpit, looking up, accusing. Bleeding, broken. Bloody. The Chief asks if Kara's okay; she asks for a moment. Down in the cockpit the little girl stares up, and the camera moves into her eye.

Socrata lights a cigarette and smokes it, over the sound of screaming, Aronofsky jump-cuts, the little girl screaming, a hand in the door, a child's painting of the Eye, Kara's mural, the Temple of Five, the supernova in the sky. She gasps, afraid, looking down into the cockpit, which is empty.

Lee comes to her later, after Chief says he can damn well talk to her himself, sits calmly and quietly at her side. "Feeling sorry for me?" Never. "Kara, everyone gets rattled. Even the best." She takes a moment to say it; it feels like dying. "I'm not going back out there. I don't trust myself." He responds without a pause, almost: "So, trust me. I'll fly your wing." She breaks out in laughter and sweat: "The CAG flying my number two?" And it's been so long since I bought the two of them that the look in his eyes at this moment took my breath away. "Whatever it takes," he says. It's nothing he hasn't said a million times before; that doesn't make it less. It makes it more. The word is trajectory. They are silent, looking, he tries without talking, she takes it and gets stronger. Strong enough to say goodbye: this is fate unfolding. "How are things with you and Dee?" Good. No, better than good. Best they've ever been. She says she's happy for him but he doesn't look at her until she swears she means it. "It's funny though, after all we've been through, we are right back where we started. You're a CAG, and I am your hotshot problem pilot." The music seems to think that line was touching, when what it was was on the nose, but that laugh and it is good. "I guess that's all we'll ever be now, huh?" Her beautiful face breaks for a second, just for a second but it's long enough, and then he looks at her, and she smiles. It's like the sun coming up, like a fresh breeze. He's touched. This isn't a story about a crackup, it's a story about how he helped her out of a hole, with his faith and his love and his respect for her. He'll give her wings.

CAP. "Starbuck, Apollo. How we doing?" Copacetic. Thirty minutes

left on the CAP; he flies alongside her and smiles, beams, begging her to feel strong again. They've flown the whole pattern, they've done the thing she thought she couldn't do. Thirty minutes, and we head to the barn. Kara smiles back, Starbuck again, for a moment, in the blue sky. And then through his canopy she sees the Heavy Raider. "Damn it," she spits, this interruption of their moment, this last-second reprieve from fate, but there it is: coming back again.

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Lee doesn't see it. Dee, back on CIC, doesn't see it. Eos kidnapped Cephalus one day, when he was hunting. Sometimes you're the interrogator, sometimes you're the prisoner. Cephalus was already married to Procris, but that didn't stop him loving Eos too. Eventually -- you know how Gods are, so impatient -- she got sick of him pining for Procris, and she sent him back, cursing them both. Procris was a jealous wife, and was spying on him one day when she heard Cephalus singing to the wind, aura. She thought he was singing to Aurora, and she surprised him, and he killed her, and they died. She thought the wind was the morning coming, and it was the scariest thing she could think of: that her husband was still in love with the goddess of the dawn. So at least Dualla's cooler than her, you have to give her that: her bug room's a lot closer to Kara's than we've gotten to hear about yet, I think.

"Apollo, Starbuck. Weapons hot. Committing. This time I'm gonna drag him back and dump his sorry ass on the hangar deck." Tigh and Adama worry and stare, on CIC; Adama calls like the twentieth Condition One since Kara started going nuts.

The storm. Apollo's lost Kara on dradis; he's blind. He can't find her, in the Eye; he begins to shout. She ignores him again, heading down after the Raider. "Starbuck, report! Starbuck, report! Do you read me? Starbuck, report! Starbuck!" Maybe she would have stopped this time, if his voice had gotten to her in time, but she's finally flown too low: her canopy cracks, or is shot through, and the wind is whistling, and she starts to pass out, flying deeper into the storm. And Lee's still screaming as she goes. "Starbuck, I have zero visibility. Starbuck, are you out there? Kara!"



Delphi, Old Caprica. The alarms of Kara's Viper become a clock radio, blaring a wakeup call. It's dawn. She slaps the clock and the radio begins to speak. "Good morning, Delphi. Got another hot one in store for you today! Time to head for the beach. Weatherman says we can expect..." A hand switches it off again: Leoben's. Leoben Conoy has hands. "Rise and shine," he says, caressing her hair, sitting down at her side on her pallet, smiling tenderly. "We have a big day ahead of us. Come on."

Later, Starbuck's not buying it: "I'm out cold on a Cylon ship, and you drugged me to play your frakkin' mind games..." I have to admit that was my first reaction, too. He shakes his head. "No games, Kara. It's about your destiny." She picks up a bottle and nails the Eye on her wall without ever looking away from him. It's one movement, a physical jerk, but I think it's my favorite moment of the whole episode. In this episode there are three Karas at least; I mean to say that there are at least three people in this episode that are Kara for sure, and we know that because they look like her. There's the little Kore one, with her bloody nose and her righteous eyes, and there's the one we know, the one in freefall. And there's the one we're about to meet, the one we met so long ago. And this movement is the definitive statement of all of these, moving as one woman, at once: a reaction to the word "destiny" and the violence it connotes. For her and for us all. We're all of us, inside, every age we've ever been, somewhere in there. Stuff this intense, and this basic, you'd be surprised sometimes who gets the talking stick. "I write my own destiny," she hisses, and sits down at the other end of the coffee table, facing away from him. This is my second favorite line, I rewound it several times to make sure: "I didn't paint that symbol, Kara. You did. In the clouds, didn't you?"

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"You didn't tell anyone else. Because you're drawn to it. You feel its pull. You want to fly into it. You want to cross over, but you're afraid." Um, of a frakkin' cloud? "Of the unknown. Death. All of your high-wire stunts have been an act. Time after time you skip to the edge of the abyss, then dance away again. But you never really conquered your fear. You've been afraid ever since that day." She knows; she's always known. Where this leads. The Eye is a circle, a circle is a zero, a birth canal, the beginning and the end: how you start and how you know you've become a grownup.

The opposite of a one, combining with it to create everything Cylons ever knew. "What day?" she asks.

Somewhere else less interesting, in the eye of the storm, Kara dozes in the Viper, listening to the whistle of the wind and the sound of thunder.

Socrata sits in her apartment, six years ago, smoking a cigarette and reading a letter from her doctor. There's a Colonial medal on the wall, from her Marine service. "All of this has happened before, and will happen again." Kara continues not crying, watching this unfold, watching herself admit that this is happening and bringing it into existence as she does so. Human psychology is based on projection; time is a human construct the Cylons will never understand, because if humans knew everything there is to know, they'd go mad, whereas Cylons go mad only at the edges of what they know. There's a knock on Socrata's door; Kara knows who it is. Somewhere a door's about to open.

"It's open," says Socrata. It's open. Kara greets her mother, with her original haircut, which looks a little wiggy from here, and Leoben and Kara stare at her. "It's hard to believe it's only six years ago. You look so much younger." She was. "I was." Socrata greets her daughter on being the first person in the family to become an officer in the Fleet. Kara smirks: "What is the world coming to?" It's an imaginary mongoose. She's a warrior like her mother; Socrata's been told that her daughter's the best natural pilot they've ever seen. Kara jerks as her younger self admits pride, admits excitement and love, forgetting herself and the lines between mother and daughter, and admits joy: "The first time I got in that cockpit, I just...felt like I belonged." Kara jerks. One day this will be all that you are, and then that will be taken away from you too. And what you'll be then, nobody knows.

"All that natural ability, and still you only graduated sixteenth in your class," gruffs Socrata. Kara looks down, ashamed at her younger self's exuberance and where it inevitably leads; Leoben looks back at her, concerned. "Sixteenth out of 117 cadets, Momma." That's nothing to be proud of; Socrata and I are agreed on that. This is Starbuck, dude. She just doesn't know that yet. She's still only Kara Thrace. "You should have been number one. They tell me that you have left a trail of demerits from here to

Aerelon. You're undisciplined, you have no respect for authority." Kara tells her mother this is no longer her concern, and Socrata gets a little scary: "You have a gift, Kara. I've always known that, here in my gut, and I am not going to let you piss that away. You're special, don't you understand that?" Kara's exuberance squeezes out the other end of the tube. Sometimes you're the interrogator, sometimes the prisoner. "No, I'm not. Would you let go of that stupid dream of yours? Look, I am sorry as hell that you never made officer. And all you have to show for a life of dedication is this crappy apartment and that frakkin' medal on the wall. But I will not make up for it all. I can't." Socrata lights a cigarette, calls her a quitter. Kara knows what happens next, watching it unfold with tears standing in her eyes; Kara doesn't know what happens next, and picks up a letter from the table. "You went to an oncologist?" Socrata rages at her to put it down, but Kara's caught in the light. "What are you gonna do about this?" Nothing. "There's nothing to do, it's metastasized. Game is over." Kara tells her mother she's sorry, but that's not enough. Socrata methodically smokes her cigarette: with every breath, she breathes out the day, with every delicious sip she drinks away the night.

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Kara begins to cry, watching it unfolding. The day she killed her mother. Kara sits at the table, too young and fresh to understand death. Without looking, she sits gingerly and reaches for her mother's hand. Kara Thrace has hands; Socrata has hands too. Kara almost looks away from herself, unfolding. "I don't want your pity!" Socrata shouts, pulling back, too quick for her daughter. "You haven't got it," Kara chokes. Socrata tells her where to shove her pity: "Feel sorry for yourself. You'll have to find another way to motivate your ass, I'm not gonna be around to do it any longer. Oh, don't tell me you're gonna cry about it now." Kara chokes, pushes it down, into the bug room, stands up. "I'm gonna walk out that door and you can look at it every frakkin' miserable day you have left, and know that I am never gonna come back through it again." And she won't. Socrata calls after her daughter; Kara cries, watching it unfolding. "You kept running, didn't you? For blocks." She runs, and runs; upstairs Socrata lights another cigarette; the clock ticks out her time. The ashtray is full of butts, six for every hour. The only thing more awful than your mother's strength is her weakness.

Kara and Leoben stand in an abandoned apartment, with the Corporal's medal still on the wall: stillness, quiet, loneliness, pills. "She waited here. Five weeks, hoping you'd come back. She died alone." Kara looks at nothing. "I was afraid, I couldn't watch." Time is not something this show has ever taken seriously; the level we're playing at right now, it shouldn't be a concern at all. Time a projection. "It's not too late. She's waiting, still." Kara jerks her head at him and then walks to the bedroom door. Which is about to open.

Kara slowly slides back the door: Socrata lying in the bed. She is small. Kara sits at her mother's side, and Socrata tries to smile, speaking softly. "You came back." All around her on the bed are scrapbooks: pictures, essays, stories. "I can't believe you kept all this." That's all heaven really is. "Everything. Always." Kara turns the page, like a flower unfolding: her childish paintings of the Eye. Somewhere a door slams open, and the bugs inside are pretty lifelike, for the time being. "Momma. Something's about to happen. You know that thing that you were trying to prepare me for? I don't know if I can do it." The fact that you can admit it's coming, the fact that you're not ignoring the sound any more, means you can. Three talked to Cottle, made love with Caprica and Gaius, kidnapped a baby: all the time, she felt it coming. She dreamed of it, and she wanted it, and she pretended and she denied, but she heard the call all the same. End of line. "Oh, yes you can. You can." How can she be sure? "You're my daughter."

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Socrata takes Kara Thrace's hand, weak and soft like paper in her daughter's strong hands. Spring returns to Sicily. The flowers unfold from the cold ground, and the sun shines down. Kara weeps, and holds her face against that hand, and somewhere a door flies open, wide. And the bugs stop jumping, as Socrata Thrace dies, with her daughter by her side. Kara cries. It's hard.

Leoben: "See, there's nothing so terrible about death. When you finally face it, it's beautiful. You're free now. To become who you really are." (*Okay, no. Death is not beautiful. Her mother just died. I know this.* It's also not always death, though, so I'll give him a bye for now.) On the threshold of revelation, coming faster and faster, heading for the asymptote, into the curve, always a pilot, always on a vector, with the whistling and the rain, sparks

flying from her approaching dawn: "You're not Leoben."

"I never said I was."

"I'm here to prepare you to pass through the next door. To discover what hovers in the space between life and death." At the end of the line, where enjambment sings: zero's the number of the Fool, the shape of the storm. It's the beginning and the end, depending on where you start counting. It goes around and around. This Leoben's just another messenger. Like any other Leoben, like anybody else at all. God has to wear masks because you're not prepared for a faceful of infinity, but that's not the secret. The secret is: how many masks.

The wind on her exhilarated face, there in her mother's house, in the bug room, becomes the hole in her cockpit canopy. The whistling wind brought by the dawn, a portrait of the womanchild cavern of the soul under pressure-heat ratio ideas of evolutions have buried their fears end of line. Kara Thrace wakes up, eyes wide, lightning everywhere. I mean to say that Kara wakes up in a storm.

No. I mean to say that in every house there's a little room we don't know about. And on the other side of that door, there are insects and darkness and the sound of scratching, and a hot red heat at the back of your eyes. And a lot of us don't ever open the door. But if you can, if you can burn off what doesn't work and step to the door and open it, if you are strong enough to accomplish the impossible, you learn an amusing fact. On the other side of that door you find the Temple of Five, the Great Hall, Heaven, Elysium: a room bigger than the universe, filled with light and singing, and all the gods and heroes you could ever want, welcoming you in. And the joke of the bugs: to think that once they were terrifying, to think that once you were so scared that they were real -- that Cylons are evil, that fear is worthwhile, that hatred is an option, that anger or violence are ever appropriate, that there are moments where God looks away, that there are times when you're alone, that anyone's destiny or fate ever went wrong, that the unfolding can be disrupted, that there's a dimension that doesn't include love, and laughter -- when those bugs are just so small, and silly, and made of plastic. That stupid joke, to think your life is a story being told by anyone but you.

"Starbuck, Apollo. Lost you on dradis. I say again, I've lost you." His voice calls her back; she's got one hand on the eject lever. She skips to the abyss and dances back again. She stops herself: the bugs aren't jumping. She should be afraid. Why isn't she afraid? Is this about death? When you're a pilot you can see the ground curve away, the way the world goes around and around. The flat Earth goes round on you, and you've gained a whole dimension to play in.

"Lee. I'm not afraid anymore." Say again? "I'm not afraid anymore," says Kara, with her mother's hand in hers, tears of love and pain and joy on her cheeks. Down in CIC, Tigh's getting nervous. You can hear it in his voice. "She should be afraid. She's damn close to the hard deck." Helo notes that the pressure is close to crushing Apollo too. It always has been. Adama urges his son to get her back, again. Always, this story: Lee bringing her back, Bill praying to the Gods he doesn't believe in, for her safe return. 90 seconds to hard deck.

"All right, Kara, listen to me. Forget the damn toaster. Climb now or you're dead."

She's already climbing, just at an angle he can't see yet. She's rising. She's bathed in light. The Viper soars, down, into the storm, on a crest of light. She's calm, and beautiful.

"Godsdamn it, Kara! Pull up now. We can still pull out of this, we haven't gone past the point of no return. Pull up!" Nothing he hasn't said before. 60 seconds to hard deck.

Gaeta and Dee get Red Section into position, alert Vipers at ready one. Lee keeps screaming.

In a wicked pack of cards you can see her, standing beneath a red, blue, and yellow star, kneeling by the water's edge. In her hands she holds two jugs of water, pouring one back into the river, and one onto the ground. She brings water to the river, life to the shore. She stands astride, enjambed upon, the line between life and death, like Three; like Three, her death and rebirth enliven and renew them both.

He finally spots her, and tells her he's coming.



"Lee...I'll see you on the other side." He begs her to listen, to come back. She begs him to let her go. It's not abandonment if you're running to; she can't explain this because we don't have the words. The message got confused.

Three stepped into the Great Hall, turning on her heel like a girl. "Is it really you?" Everywhere was the light the Hybrid sees, the songs she hears. She stepped toward one of them, one of the Five, who held out his/her hand. Her eyes went, soft, as she got the joke. "You. Forgive me. I had no idea." And if I'd written it, the last thing she'd have heard that fucker say was, "I love you. We've always loved you. You can come now."

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"They're waiting for me," she says, the joy and weariness fighting in her voice. Looking down at all the Karas, from above the Eye, looking at how all of them lead in a line here, and nowhere else, looking at this story from the new dimension, seeing how she'd been hiding from herself, around corners and under bridges, inside the bug room. You have to laugh. All that time masturbating and getting too drunk to walk, all that time lying and treating boys like dirt, all that time hating yourself: it's ridiculous. You have to laugh. This is a life seen from the eye of a storm, and where it leads is here, and she knew it all along. All around her the atmosphere is getting heavier as she descends; the water spattering on her canopy cuts off all other sound. What can you hear?

Whatever face the messenger wears, and I don't honestly think it matters, the message can't come clear, through all this dirt and fear and pain. Until you burn off what doesn't work, between stars and between your lovers and your lies, until you lay down the burdens of hate that keep you tied to the pain of your childhood, unable to see your way clear, you can't hear the message properly. Until the rain washes you clean again. You'll never hear it right, until you watch it unfolding and realize it couldn't have been any other way. I don't know if the Cylons can see time this way, but I know the Hybrid can, which is why nothing surprises her, or Leoben. But it's also the way Kara can write her own destiny, and have it written for her: this is just a story she's been telling herself, all along. It's the only way we can live. If we knew what was going to happen -- if we knew the pain

and fear and ugliness that's part of our fate, if we forgot that it keeps the world turning -- who knows what we'd do differently? That's why the Oracle only has one eye, because this is not part of the physics: God and time work together to tell you this story, as many times as it takes, until you start paying attention. If it doesn't hurt, if it doesn't feel like death, you're just pretending to change. Burn sage and sweetgrass and get a haircut and move to another city, go on a diet and swear off men for six months, a year, the rest of your life: that's cosmetic. Nothing really changes until you close your eyes and jump. That's half the confusion right there. Take a drop of water, or mercury, and divide it: whatever face the messenger wears, the message stays the same. Socrata, the Lords of Kobol, the Oracle, Leoben, the Hybrid. The message stays the same, it's just that we keep hearing it wrong. Over and over again, until we get it right.

In the stillness and light, with the wind in her hair, a holy smile upon her face, lit from within by the fire of a thousand wrong turns suddenly and violently wrenched straight: all those mistakes weren't mistakes, they were just the way things had to go. They were just the unfolding, from a funny angle. Whether this has all happened before and will happen again is beside the point, that's just rhetoric: seen from above, this is all happening. She closes her eyes in the unfolding. The Kore child dances in the light of the abyss, her face clean and joyful, almost too bright to see, free of the constraints of time and what we see. She smiles in absolute peace: how can you look at her, this beautiful, calm girl, this gorgeous peace, this holy calm, this rightness, and think this is a mistake? I believe that Kara Thrace will lead the Fleet to Earth, just as I believe Three will stand and walk and love again, and Caprica will know God's love, and Gaius will know peace, and Gaeta will bone a dude. Just as I believe that until the bugs stop jumping, the war will never end, because fear and violence create more bugs and more fear and more violence, and the more frightened you are, the more likely you are to both act like assholes and forget that it's just a game, fail to recognize they're only toys. I believe these things just as I believe there's a day all pawns will become queens, and the Chips stop talking, and the angel rejoins what was broken, on a holy anvil that only looks like war, from this joke of an angle.

Kara sits in the Temple of Five, and the Great Hall, and in Heaven, and between five stars, burning off what doesn't work. Beautiful. He never said he was Leoben, but Leoben's always been just another word for fate anyway. Just another messenger, just another way for her to let that fate in. Kara sits in blessed enjambment, in the sanctified unfolding, her life stretched out behind her, all one story, with a beginning and a middle and so many endings, and no endings at all.

Kara Thrace had hair, which she cut whenever things got too heavy to carry. Kara Thrace had hands, which they took away during the nova and which they keep taking away. Kara Thrace had wings, for which she gave everything, to make her mother happy, to reach a destiny that everybody knew was coming. Kara Thrace had breasts, and legs, and funny little feet, and a sexy voice, and a ready smile, and a lovely mouth. Kara Thrace had eyes that could always see the weak places, and a tactical mind, and a quick wit, and a burning fire inside that kept her moving forward faster than anybody could keep up. She faced things. She opened doors with her hands, and when that didn't work she used her feet. We were safer with her than we are without. She fought until she couldn't. She fought until she didn't have to.

Starbuck's Viper explodes, in the pressure, just as Lee sees her Raider for the first time. He screams. And Starbuck's hair, and hands, and wings, and breasts, and legs, and feet, and voice, and smile and mouth, and those eyes, and that brain, are gone faster than the time it takes for them to burn. She's taken apart in the unfolding. Starbuck is gone, shouting at the light, raging as fast as she can forward, into the arms of those heroes that went before: Ellen Tigh, D'Anna Biers, Crashdown, Kat. Socrata Thrace throws her arms and wings around that Kore child, her daughter Kara, all those broken girls made whole, and they finally know peace. In Heaven they have so many cigarettes it's ridiculous, and they're duty-free, and every week is shirtless-Helo week, and that's all I know about Heaven. And Kara can wake up in the morning and not dread what happens next, and the rips in her heart are healed over, and you can barely see the scar. She'll never have to hurt anybody again, because she's got no pain in her: it's all burned off. I love her and I already miss her, but I'm not going to begrudge her that kind of grace, or that glory. Eternal Kara Thrace, dancing in the abyss and storm, forever. Strong, and smart, and wise, and powerful. Just as in life.

Adama shouts at his son to abort and Lee cranks his ship away from the accident. "Lee, do you have her in sight? Can you see her?" He doesn't answer for a bit; Helo and Dee stare at nothing, waiting for the response. Gaeta and Tigh look to the Admiral.

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"Negative, she...went in. She went in." Gaeta and Dualla can't believe it: this is just more Starbuck nonsense, the wind and the light of a thousand dawns and returns from the dead and worse. She's just going in for her next trip to the underworld, surely. She'll show up in the Blackbird, or a stolen Raider, or holding her daughter by the hand, like she always does, and Adama will stop making that face again, and everybody will laugh again, and the quadrangle of doom will start over again, and everything will be the same as it always was, because that's what she does: skip to the abyss, dance away again. "We're sending in the search and rescue birds right now," Adama stutters. "We'll find her." Lee's voice is ragged and painful to listen to: "No, Dad, it's no use. Her ship's in" -- his voice breaks horribly, breaks in half, breaks like a bone -- "pieces. Her ship's in pieces. No chute. We lost her."

The Admiral, standing in CIC, holding the con, looks up to the empty skies and begins to weep. Saul and Felix and Anastasia look at Bill, and look away again, and he continues to cry, becoming smaller than he's ever been. William Adama has eyes, and a throat, and they are full of tears.

Later, in his quarters, Bill sits at his desk, Aurora at his right hand. He breathes hard, striving, perfecting his model ship. He affixes the goddess to her prow: this family, every piece just right. No mothers without sons, no fathers losing daughters. Moving forward, toward the Lie of Earth that even he now believes, thanks in large part to his fallen child. He looks at the ship, moving forward with dawn upon her prow, a light breeze and the soft and rosy light, into the future. The dawn she put into his hands, when he feared she was going crazy, with the loveliest light in the back of her eyes, with her tiny hand in his, passing a goddess to him, smiling bashfully, full of love and light, even as the darkness was closing in. The moment in which they promised each other, with Laura standing witness, that everything was going to be okay: she put this dawn in his hand, and then took herself out of it. She handed him the future, a future which no

longer includes Starbuck, no longer includes his favorite among all his children. A future he fights for, in large part, for her. Earth: a gift, to replace all the things New Caprica took from Kara and Saul.

The Admiral begins to weep now in earnest, now that he's got nothing to do with his hands, now that the worthless ship is complete, now that he's got nothing to think about but the hole in him. Such a small girl, to leave such a big hole: that's our Kara. What can he hear? Nothing but that. He crushes the thing, suddenly, with his hands, and throws it to the floor, and cries to the Gods he doesn't believe in, and refuses to beg for her safe return again, but begs for strength instead. From this angle things are pretty bad, and he's very angry at what we've seen unfolding. I mean to say he takes something that he loves, and destroys it, like a bottle thrown against the wall, in protest.

# YOU ARE ALL A LOST GENERATION

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 18 | Aired on 03.10.2007

*The Son Also Rises* - [Gaius Baltar's](#) new defense attorney is a piece of work; Sam and Lee mourn Kara; a magical cat makes an appearance.

**Recaplet:** Part one of the three-part finale, *Re: The Colonial Fleet v. Gaius Baltar*. It's been two weeks since Kara's death. Lee, Saul, Bill, and Sam find ways of dealing, such as getting drunk, crying like babies, protesting their military fate, and the like. Lee, Bill, and Laura get into it about whether or not the Fleet's legal system is worthwhile and whether or not Gaius should have a real trial, or the Saddam kind. Lee finally gets his way through the awesome power of his whining, as usual. Baltar's first defense attorney gets blown all to hell, which causes everybody (Cally) to act like idiots and eventually get schooled by Athena. Also by Roslin, who takes a firm stance on bowing to terrorism for the fifty-first episode in a row, and basically says that Baltar will get a fair trial just to fuck with the bomber for being a jerk. The second defense attorney, Romo Lampkin, has so many idiosyncrasies that they almost overshadow his total hotness. Lampkin also gets blown up, but not in a way where it's going to stop the steamy onslaught of his jurisprudence. Romo and Lee, sometimes they're like this, other times they're like this. Lots of really awesome story points for such shitty dialogue, but what else is new.

So the Mad Bomber What Bombs Defense Attorneys turns out to be beefy LSO Kelly, making this the first time he's done anything remarkable, and of course Cally's all over it, but his reasoning...I do believe that it has something to do with Athena not believing in medicine, for all the sense it makes. Adama wigs about whether or not he should let Lee be involved in the trial, since his kids are dying left and right, and they have a big fight about how each one of them misses Kara more than the other, but instead of having this happen in a realistic, non-shitty way, they have an entire conversation about verbatim how each one of them misses Kara more than the other, and how crazy that is. This happens in each scene, as over and over again we are told precisely what is unfolding before our very eyes. It's like having your closed captioning on a very special Michael Angeli Is A Shitty Writer Who Has Problems With Women setting you didn't even know about. Anyway, other things Lampkin pulls off include possibly getting



Caprica to flip, getting Caprica back on Gaius's side, or both; or maybe he's a Cylon, or a Final Fiver, or maybe he's doing his job really well; stealing random shit from everybody like a loon; turning Lee and Bill against each other, then bringing them together, then turning them against each other while simultaneously bringing them back together, then turning them against each other in a secret way that nobody notices; and confusing everybody about everything. Love!

**Recap:** Previously, a man named Gaius wrote a book, and people started reading it. Tom Zarek worried about fallout from Baltar's trial, but even though Zarek's always right, nobody listened. Previously, a man named Ernest went to Spain and wrote a book, about loss and impotence, and the epigraph was this, from Ecclesiastes: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the Earth abideth for ever." It was his first novel, this dude gets his dick bitten off by a bull, and that's like all I remember about that book. I'd rather have my dick bitten off by a bull than ever watch another Michael Angeli script, or have to look at a shitty pun like the title of this episode, again. We wanted a eulogy and got another round of Daddy Theater instead. Ernest specialized in negative space: his stories took place in the realm of what's unsaid, what's missing. That is... not really the case this week, on Battlestar Galactica.

Previously, Dualla told her husband that he was a [soldier without a war](#), and told her father-in-law that [parents shouldn't be separated from their children](#). Laura told Bill that his son should [take over](#) as guardian of humanity's morality, maybe in perpetuity. Bill disagreed, then agreed, then wondered if he was too remote from his charges, then [worried](#) he'd gotten too close, then switched back and forth a hundred times, trying to find the balance between command and service. Sam and his wife's lover managed to reach some kind of manly grace about the whole situation. [Then she died](#). That was two weeks ago. Nobody -- least of all Bill's son, Dualla's husband, Kara's lover -- knew how to walk the line between governance and war, how to be a soldier and a man of the law at the same time. Nobody was there to tell him who to be, anymore.

Now the Admiral's alone, looking through the files: Captain Kara "Starbuck" Thrace, erstwhile CAG and sometime assassin, drunkard and pilot trainer, daughter. He's weeping even before

we join him.

On Colonial One, Tory and Laura write the names of every ship captain in the Fleet on little slips of paper, and Tory draws out the names. "Captain Elias Meeker, Gideon," Laura reads out, before the attendees. That's four. Somebody's missing.

A citation for valor and bravery, pilot performance logs, a disciplinary notice for [striking a superior asshole](#), another disciplinary notice, a third: Thrace's file indeed.

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Roslin reads out the fifth and final name, for the tribunal -- or she would, if she weren't so surprised. She chokes on it.

Photographs, commendations, the paper trail of a life in service. The physical evidence of a pilot hounded by glory, a piece of his heart he can look at, the cabins she never got to build, the trajectory that ended wrong. There's a birthday card, from Kara: "You were always like a father to me...see the resemblance?" A smirking picture of Starbuck in uniform, a silly mustache scrawled across her face. "Happy birthday, Young Man. Much love, Kara." He breaks a little more. She's with Zak now, another child gone. When we mourn for our children, it's not just for what we've lost, but for the dreams and futures that never happened. "Yeah. I see the resemblance." It's in his smile and the way he loves the nuggets; it's in the shaking of his hands.

It's in the strength of his back, in the shadow on his eyes. Sam Anders stands atop a Raptor, a crowd gathered all around, staring up at him in his extremity. He tosses a cubit in the air and catches it: heads. Again: heads. "Did you see that? Four in a row! It's a frakkin' miracle. Watch this, one more time, it's gonna be -- watch! ... Heads! Every time! You see that? It's heads!" They beg him to come down but he's fine where he is. It's in the slur of his voice, and in the way he nearly misses it in the air, every time.

Lee stands in the Hall of Remembrance, unable to pin her to the wall. He looks down at her, up at Kat, nobody there to tell him who to be, or how to do this. He hears somebody enter the corridor and hides the picture: to be grieving, is this appropriate? Is this too much, or too little? There aren't any rules, not with that much history behind it. What if it's somebody who knows the

rules of grieving better? What if it's somebody who shouldn't see him like this? A subordinate? His wife? Or maybe it's somebody who can tell him how to do this. Who to be now. Take away the plan and Lee falls apart.

Racetrack brings Apollo to the hangar bay, where Sam's still landing heads, every time. "See that? My girl's too lucky to check out." Lee knows how to do this part: "Hey, Sam." Sam smiles and calls him Lee; laughs, and calls him "Apollo." It's a hiccupping, stoner Dane Cook kind of laugh: we've never heard him laugh before. We're only hearing it now because he's angry and breaking. I wish we'd known Sam Anders before the storm; I wish we'd known Sam Anders before the attacks. Lee climbs up beside him, to save him like he used to save her, on the bad nights when she got like this: "You're flying. Let's just get down and get some sleep. Come on." Sam pushes himself away from Lee, promising him he's fine, just needing to sit down, to keep flipping coins. He lands hard, down on the Raptor's roof; Lee kneels beside him to see if he's all right. "She wasn't supposed to..." says Sam, and Lee begs him to stop. Sam always knew that she would save him; Lee always knew he could save her. They're both wrong. Who are they, now? Sam falls, hits the Raptor's wing, lands on his face on the cement below. Lee cries out and jumps down besides him, scared: "Sam! Frak! Frak. Is he okay?" The bad nights, when she got like this. Sam groans, bruised but drunk enough. "Ah...I think I fell." Lee just keeps calling his name as he holds him, on the deck. "... She's still alive, right?" Sam's breath is knocked out, he's senseless. No, Lee says, strong for a moment: "She's gone, Sam. She's gone." Sam looks up at him, into his eyes: "I know." Lee's quiet a while. "Yeah." They're the only ones that really know what that means; how a preposition can turn on you, how many places a word like "gone" can describe.

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On CIC, LSO Kelly approves Hotdog for a long approach. It's too quiet. Something's missing. "Never thought I'd miss all Starbuck's yakking," grumbles Tigh. Gaeta nods, agrees, stays quiet. The Admiral arrives and Tigh laughs, calling him "Your Honor." "You haven't heard? Where have you been?" Saying goodbye. "They just announced it, you won the lottery. You now own exactly one-fifth of Baltar's skinny ass. You're one of five captains picked to serve on the judge's tribunal." The Admiral takes this in: this

tremendous responsibility that's suddenly so trivial.

Racetrack waits with Skulls and Athena, waiting for Gaius's lawyer. Alan Hughes is young and beautiful, a creepy waste of time and energy: "He sits back there and tries to whisper in my ear when he talks. I've got a helmet!" He leans in behind Racetrack, whispering in her ear: "Sorry." He's late. Cally helps him aboard the Raptor, calling him by name; down on the deck Racetrack swears, if he takes his shoes off again, on the way to Zephyr, she'll kill him dead. Skulls complains about the trial: "Everybody knows he's guilty, he gave the Cylons our location." Completely true, just not in the way Skulls or anybody can know. "Why even give the son of a bitch a trial?" Cally explains the justice system, in her usual way: "Um, because he's entitled. Even him. It's called justice?" Skulls clarifies that justice would mean Baltar dead and Starbuck alive, as Racetrack runs her flight check, and then jerks sideways as her Raptor explodes around her. Athena jumps into the smoke and coughing, calling for a medic. Racetrack is alive, Alan Hughes is dead. Is that justice too?

Credits: 41,399 souls in the Fleet. On Colonial One, Laura Roslin is giving a press conference on the murder of Alan Hughes, and his replacement as Gaius's attorney. "Will that be done by lottery as well?" She assures them, in her tired steely voice, that he'll be replaced shortly, from a list of candidates they're reviewing. "In the context of this explosion, which obviously was no accident, do you really think that it's in the best interest of the Fleet to proceed with this trial?" Roslin is succinct, but answers questions that haven't been asked yet: "This administration will never bow to terrorism." It's about what's unspoken: not "is this in the Fleet's best interest" but "how dare you say this isn't in the Fleet's best interest." She's getting better at her job; it's scarier all the time. "Wait. You know, let me say something here to all of you, let me get this clear, all right? As long as I am President, this administration will not allow terrorism to alter the framework of our legal system." Now that, I guess, we've figured out what that framework is. "We will proceed with the trial, rigorously. Thank you, all of you." Adama escorts her out, over the shouting of the fourth estate. Where's Playa? I miss Playa. And that guy who did the election, too. I like many, many reporters in space.

Apollo's briefing the pilots, as best he can. Helo corrects him a few times and puts everybody, regretfully, on double shifts. Narcho in particular is very sleepy and worried about Lee's scattered state. When Apollo assigns Sharon to shuttle runs, Racetrack warns her to check her back seat, and the pilots laugh. Lee tries to join in: "Hey, hey, you got lucky, Starbuck! If I were you, I would seriously consider buying a..." Narcho's smile falls; Hotdog's follows. Lee realizes what he's done, and breaks a little more. "Racetrack," he corrects himself. "I'm sorry." He dismisses them once and they look at him, worried, so he dismisses them again.

"It's so comforting to know that you're not afraid!" says Laura to the new attorney, up in shiny Colonial One. "You're not afraid to represent the most hated man alive," Angeli reiterates for us the scale and scope of what we already knew was going on here, and follows up with a question so stupidly on the nose as to seem rhetorical: "The question is, why?" Oh, is it? "For the fame, the glory," says Romo Lampkin. Romo Lampkin. Sigh. He's dreamy as ever. You know, I even watched Medium once because he was on it. My Badger. Here, he's wearing silly sunglasses indoors, and speaking with a crazy accent as usual; mostly, his name is: Romo Lampkin. Wherefore? Like there was a contest at a grade school to name the character, but somehow Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman and George Lucas teamed up on it instead. Romo Lampkin, the fleet-fingered defense attorney. "You worked in the public litigation office on Caprica," says Adama, hating lawyers but unsure whether Lampkin's lawyer enough. "You think you have the qualifications to handle a case of this magnitude?" Lampkin assures the Admiral he was "born for this," and I think implies that anyone with a pulse could pull this case. Off-camera, someone hurls a cat onto the desk; Roslin reacts like she's having a brain aneurism, for some reason. I always figured Laura would like cats. "Lance belonged to my wife. Don't worry, he doesn't scratch or bite like she did. If it's of any comfort, I despise him [Gaius? The cat?] as much as you do having to hire me. So...there it is. Shall we get started?" Ex-wives are as hilarious as... what's a really lazy joke that's really, really hoary and unfunny? Lawyers? They're as hilarious as lawyers. Oh, wait!

The Admiral puts Lee on Lampkin's security, pissing off Lee no end. "So that's it, you're grounding me?" Not that the Lawyer Bomber is a kiddie ride, but when you've lost two children to

Vipers, you're allowed to hedge. Zak knew he wasn't ready to fly, but Kara put him up there anyway. Kara knew she wasn't ready to fly, but Lee put her up there anyway. No more decisions being made by anybody; no more anybody-but-the-Admiral telling Lee who to be. "If whoever set that charge is one of our own, then you're the only one I can trust." Lee whines some more, and Bill tells his son it's "an important job," that he "needs Lee's help." Lee abruptly protests that he's "fine," reading the unwritten, and Bill assures him he's not. Why? "Because I'm not." Lee snits that maybe Bill needs some rest, and the Admiral steps back into command: "Helo will be stepping in as CAG. I want you on this ship. Not up there, not until you can...work this out." Lee nods and whines some more. People don't actually talk, think or act like this, ever, except on TV shows.

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Apollo shows Lampkin to his quarters: two Marines outside the door, Ms. Cassidy (prosecuting attorney) down the hall. Head, co-ed showers, the whole bit. Lampkin asks to see his client, and when Lee balks, he points at him: "Pilot." Yeah. "King of the Pilots? We could stand around here and discuss why you got stuck with me, if you want." It's the unspoken again: Romo's natural language, his first tongue, is what's unsaid. Lee offers to take Lampkin to his client immediately, in his cell. Lampkin shies away from the cell, and then from an interrogation room -- "Interrogation rooms give me stage fright" -- before volunteering Lee's quarters. (Remember? The ones he shares with his wife? Who doesn't exist this week?) "Before it gets wired for sound like this place probably is. What's the problem? Forgot to make your bed?" Lee gives in on the location, but refuses to leave them alone. Lampkin moves on this one as well: "It is Major, isn't it? I have the right to consult with my client in private, without anybody eavesdropping or looking in. Whoever cares the most, wins. Says so in there." He holds up a copy of *Law & Mind: The Psychology Of Legal Practice*, by one estranged-grandfather Joseph Adama. Yeah. "I wanna see my client, you don't care, I win." He puts the book back in his bag, waits just the right amount of picosecond, and muses. "You know, you look like him." Like the grandfather, the lawgiver, the defender: "You knew my grandfather?" Like the one person Bill doesn't give too much credit. "Hated his guts." Like Bill. "He taught me everything I know." Also like Bill.



So we've got parallels, and parallels, all of which are awesome, even if they're built of the usual pointless father/son crap. Lee looks like his grandfather, whom his dad hates for being a lawyer, just like Romo, who was mentored and alienated by Joseph, just like Bill, who was never present for Lee, just like Joseph, for Bill. One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the Earth abideth for ever. There's a division right now in the Fleet and in their military, and in the hearts of our crew, between what's just and what's right: between service and government. There's a division right now within Lee, who's disallowed from taking part in the trial because he's the CAG and disallowed from being the CAG because his sister died, and who now is the head of a Marine security detail: between service and governance lies justice. But Romo Lampkin has already pointed out that becoming Joseph is the best revenge, since Lee and Joseph always did get along: Lee knows Roslin's side of things better than anybody, he's always been the one standing between the two halves of this show. The strings are all there, in place, and Lee's hanging in space now that she's gone, waiting for somebody to start pulling them again. For somebody to tell him who to be now.

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Somewhere else there are hands in plastic gloves, putting together a bomb for Romo. In the brig -- not Lee's quarters? -- Lampkin's putting together a bomb for Gaius, and for Caprica. It's in the unsaid: even Lee has signed confidentiality papers. "Papers" is like Angeli's favorite word -- remember young Lee playing with Joseph's "law books and papers"? That's the only reason I noticed at all, because of that awkward construction last time, but now it's like everywhere. Weirdest thing. Second weirdest: Gaius Baltar, who's going nutsier than he's ever gone before, wriggling and jerking and staring, once they get his bulletproof vest off him. "Look, this whole charade's pathetic. Pathetic! Security? Security's already toasting my other attorney's, uh, untimely demise. About one thing that bloke ever did, apart from napping, was, you know, manage to...smuggle out my papers. Papers. Do you have any papers?" Romo pulls out a pad and Gaius begins to write before he's even done thanking him. "The nature of modern life is...obsession." Without looking up, he asks Romo his chances for a fair trial. They laugh about that one. "But you haven't exactly been helping yourself, now,

have you?" Gaius worries that he's going to yell about the writing, but that's not it: "On the contrary, keep it coming. This new manifesto of yours shows a great change in you. This little uh...operating manual of yours, well...keeps them all guessing." Interesting choice of words, no? Operating manual. To recreate the Fleet in the image of a perfect machine, to strip away the ugliness and complexity of human life and make everything fair, forever. That's how he got the Presidency, after all: by promising them these dreams. He'll get there again.

Gaius hunkers closer, trusting Lampkin now that he's signed off on the manifestos. "Right, okay. Okay. ... Caprica Six. I'm worried about her. She's the key. They can use her to completely destroy me." Romo nods. They won't have far to go. "We need to get to her. We need to know what she's thinking. We need to...I mean, talk to her. Tell her, uh...tell her that I love her very much. And I'm thinking about her... a lot?" The language of love, it's not Gaius's first language. Whether he's fooling or not, whether the message here is that she needs to buy it or not, forget Three and worship him again or simply love him like she used to, I can't tell. He's too squirrely right now. He's never been able to tell the difference and he's not about to start now: what Gaius needs, Gaius schemes for. His concept of love has always been tied to his concept of usefulness, and that's Lampkin's language too: "I can sense that, yes." Gaius continues to dart his eyes at Lee, speak in strange half-ciphers. "You need to, you need to find out where we're all...where we're all standing." That's the thing Lampkin knows the second he comes in the room: where everybody's standing. The weak places. "To listen requires a voice. For what needs to be known, requires us to ask. My Triumphs, My Mistakes, by Gaius Baltar." Gaius's smile is beautiful, he's loving this. It's Romo's mightiest yank yet. "But you say it very well," he says, in the moment of etiquette, pretending they are gentlemen, that he's not crazy, with half the world shoved down his pants, that they are scholars together, again. "I've done the reading. Once those papers [Drink!] arrive, I suggest you do yours."

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Outside: "Fly me to Colonial One." Immediately. Now. "You don't understand, you can't just jump in a Raptor. These are things have to be coordinated." Except for in a second, when the Raptor

they're using just happens to be ready to fly, Sharon in the cockpit, bomb armed underneath. I hate this episode. "Where would you rather be, Major? Here, as the parade float for the bereaved?" Too far, but he knows it: strings behind strings. "... Everybody looking at you like you're bleeding out of your side... " Lee tells him he'll be seeing real blood in a second, and Lampkin looks at him, over his glasses. Watch his eyes: he only lies when he's looking at you. He's like the anti-Adama. Which is of course exactly what Lee's been looking for since he was in his teens. "Oh, there is someone home! Look, I need those files. You come with me, they might just give them to me. I wait, they're gonna discover that Baltar's pregnant before I get them." That's not the game, I don't know what his game is yet, but that's not why he needs Lee in the hangar right now. Maybe it's just the shitty script making up problems for itself to solve, maybe it's something else. I know if Mark Sheppard weren't such a great actor I'd automatically assume the former. "What is your job, anyway? Keep me alive, or keep me from doing mine?" Actually, the correct answer is "command the frakkin' Air Group," but whatever. The pointless and confusing shell game of finding out Helo and Lee's job each week has been a lynchpin of the series since the first season. I actually like it when Lee's with the Marines, because I think he also likes it best, but I have high hopes for this legal thing.

LSO Kelly is the big beefy guy that looks like [gay Larry](#) crossed with Peyton Manning, the one football player I know, and what he's doing is giving Lee and Romo the runaround. About what? About that Raptor that suddenly doesn't need to be requisitioned in advance and is just sitting on the deck all gassed up and ready for a joyride. I figured that took place between scenes, but Kelly's the LSO: he shouldn't be surprised that Lee's coming to board the Raptor that he just called up and asked for, so I am going with "this is stupid." Kelly reminds Lee about staying grounded, per the Admiral's orders -- "the father factor," Badger hums -- and Lee begs. "Give me a break, I'm along for the ride!" Kelly asks him not to do this to him, that he's "in enough dung already," and who knows what that means either since it's a strange line coming from nowhere, unless by "dung" he means "pointless and bizarre Angeli hate-motivation that makes no sense at all," in which case I withdraw the objection, because: he's in enough dung already for real. Like a little bitch, Apollo steps around him,

nose in the air, and boards Sharon's Raptor. He sits down beside her and nods, and Chief orders the Raptor a tow -- Didn't we used to have shuttles? Didn't we call them "shuttles"? -- and all of a sudden, things get so desperately idiotic that I have to go lie down now.

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... Okay, so what happens is that Lampkin's cat either escapes of its own accord and goes wandering out onto the Raptor's exterior, or Lampkin lets the cat out of his bag for some reason, and then the cat goes shooting down the wing like a regular cat moseying around but sped up to hyperfast speed, like somebody just discovered television, and the Chief acts weird about the cat and chases it around, for a good goddamn long time, and Lampkin's running around, possibly calling Lance the cat "JoJo," and then Chief crawls under the Raptor going "Here, kitty kitty," and then he looks up and sees the bomb on the underside of the Raptor, and realizes that it's a bomb, and yells BOMB, and everybody panics. Which is one very long sentence but a very broad kind of embarrassment. There's a cat? The whole point of the cat was to make ex-wife jokes and then randomly lead Chief to the bomb? That's fucking stupid. That's for some other show, a shitty show I don't watch. Unless somehow Romo wanted Lee in the hangar bay to see but not get blown up by the bomb, and manipulated Kelly into becoming crazy and making no sense, and has cat-control powers, and is able to manipulate the Raptor schedule without Lee knowing it, and both does and does not know what a bomb looks like... unless all of these things are true, this episode is shitty in at least one of six ways. And unless all these things are true, it's much more possible that this episode is shitty in all six.

Adama yells at Lee for being on the hangar bay being Romo's bodyguard, when his orders were to... be Romo's bodyguard. Lee points this out, and Adama's like, "Except how your job is not to be led around by the nose," and yells about how the "bastard yanked [his] chain," so he jumped... none of which even happened. I get the point of the scene, and it's stupid, and the dialogue would be stupid anyway, but the motivations don't scan. Apparently Bill's upset because a bomb blew up, so he's acting irrational about it. Which is fine, and appropriate to the ongoing story, but there are two problems with it so far: 1) Bill Adama

wouldn't react like this, and 2) nobody would react like this. It's like somebody wrote down a short outline of how the episode was supposed to go, and then that's what turned into the script. BILL AND LEE FIGHT ABOUT KARA'S DEATH AND THE BOMB AND ALSO HOW ROMO IS LEADING LEE AWAY FROM HIS FATHER. And since that's what the outline says, that's damn well what is going to happen in this scene, even if it makes no sense on a character level or even in terms of the proceedings of the episode's plotlines. So all of a sudden Bill's jealous of Romo and Lee, except that hasn't happened yet; Bill's pissed about his child's life being in danger, even though he assigned his child to this danger; Bill's upset because nobody cares that his daughter died, even though everybody totally cares. It's just so stupid. Lee brings up again that he was assigned to security, and Bill just goes off the deep end, asshole-wise, pointing out that even within the context of being wrong in this argument, he's still somehow right, because for "security," Lee sure did a bad job finding a bomb. So dumb.

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Lee points out how he tried to skirt the rules by having Athena fly, and Bill responds: "You could've died. Plain and simple, you're a soldier. Live like one, start acting like one." And even though this makes no sense, Lee assumes that he's talking about getting back on track after Kara died, so... now we're going to talk about that. Because that's what was on the outline, that's why! "She's been gone two weeks. I didn't realize the clock was running." Bill tells him to stop, but he won't: "... because maybe we're just built differently." Like love is something you can quantify, right? To say one person's love, or pain, are greater or lesser than another person's love, or pain, is to evince a complete lack of understanding of love. Or pain. "You stop," Bill growls again. "Don't you dare quantify my loss!"

People, living and breathing human people, do not talk like this. What's offensive to me is that, having killed her off, or whatever, you put the next episode -- the one that's supposedly all about the aftermath of something that happened moments before the end of last episode -- into the hands of the most tone-deaf, gender-confused member of the writing staff... and what, we're not going to notice? You've got your Kara fans, which is a lot of viewers, and your Kara/Leoben shippers, as shuddery as that concept is, and you've got the Kara/Lee people, who act like jerks

when they're provoked... and that's what the episode is about. Resolving that stuff. So you just hand that right over to the one person on staff who seriously cannot do it? Literally does not have the ingredients in his chemical makeup to tell a story of this emotional and structural complexity properly? Or without getting his oily self all over it? Who cannot tell a story of this nature in such a way that it makes sense? Or expresses anything in particular beyond plot and the mystifying actions of characters without any clear narrative purpose or motivation?

It's not that the episode is that bad: the acting is amazing -- Trucco and Bamber manage to make grief palpable -- the story is great, the ideas are wonderful... but there's no translation of idea to living, breathing moment. Just a bunch of "what if" runthroughs of a bunch of ideas about what this episode could be about, without bothering to make the resulting episode a reality. As a Kara fan, though not -- I think -- a frothing or overinvested idiot, and one who clearly enjoyed her exit and what it implies, this nonetheless ticks me off. This show should be better than this anyway, but when you pull this shit right after something you knew was going to freak the viewership out, something that was intended to freak the viewership out... that's disrespectful to the audience in a way that has nothing to do with love of particular characters or storylines, but to do with quality in television and -- frankly -- the ability to produce 20 consistently compelling episodes of television in a season. An ability which two seasons in a row have shown is not necessarily within the grasp of this series, as perfect -- as inspiring, as touching, as challenging -- as it is overall. (Remember the low point of Season One? Well, I don't, I loved it all -- Yes, even ["Six Degrees"](#) -- but conventional wisdom says it was ["Litmus."](#) Which is not only an episode I adore, but turns out to be central to the story, as it now stands, on like every level. Now picture me saying that about ["Black Market"](#) in three years. Impossible, or at least highly improbable, and I'm not so sure I'd stick around for that show, unless it were as good as this.)

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Meanwhile, back in the fight that is simultaneously really important and just ghastly enough that I wandered away for a few paragraphs, Lee is telling his father... you know what? Fuck it.



**Apollo:** You have no idea. You have no frakking idea! **Adama:** What, you think yours is deeper? **Apollo:** Well... **Adama:** -- Yours is greater? In two weeks, there's going to be a trial, and I'm going to do what I was chosen to do, and so are you. You build a frakkin' nest around that man, and you protect his ass.

Commercial, thank God, and then down in the Tool Room -- not to be confused with the setting of the last scene -- Chief's showing the bomb to everybody. I mean everybody, people that have never ever been down there before: Kelly, Cally, Athena. "Frakker meant business this time. That thing had gone off, we'd be picking up Raptor and people parts with tweezers." Kelly goes off on a Dr. Robert Rant that has nothing to do with anything but setting up his deus ex crazy at the end of the episode. "Every day I wave jocks out there. A lot of them are my friends. People I care for and love. It's hard enough watching them die in battle, but rickshawing Baltar's frakkin' attorney around? Frak that."

Translation: "My job is stupid, and I'm a background character, but the people hate Gaius Baltar." Cally opines that "the Cylons want us to destroy ourselves, and this is how they're doing it."

Translation: the stupider people still kind of love Gaius Baltar, and the nonexistent Cylons dated my husband, who is now slumming. Athena gives her a look that needs no translation, and she starts up again: "By planting bombs, making suspicious of each other. You know what's funny? By the time the Cylons catch up with us they won't even have to attack. They'll just clean up the mess we made. I think they're here." The one that is tells her she's wrong, and Cally for once doesn't act like a jerk for its own sake: "Okay, all I know is I kissed Nicky this morning and it could've been the last time." Chief tells her to settle down and she mentions that he kissed him too: what will the Cylons take from her next? "Some of us don't get a second chance. Or a third." Having had enough of Cally's bullshit -- and outlasting me by at least the last five minutes -- Sharon finally takes off. Workplace bigotry is so Cally's style. The Chief decides to take the bomb to the Admiral, last seen having a hissy fit about bombs.

Apollo shrieks at Lampkin about security measures for fifteen minutes, about how not only doors but also books, shoes, visitors, sunglasses, sexy attorneys, dead girlfriends, estranged fathers, estranged grandfathers, workout gear, DVD box sets: all of these are potentially deadly. Romo's like, "A) Got it. B) If they're going to kill me, they're going to kill me one way or the other, because

evil is always smarter than Lee Adama." He then immediately offers a standing bribe to visit "the Cylon woman." YAY!

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Meanwhile, in Baltar's pants, he is rooting. His pen is gone, and over and over he's whispering, "The nature of modern life is obsession..."

Also missing? Roslin's glasses, which she expositis while she's giving Lee permission to depose Caprica on Colonial One. Adama stands around being very judgy and weird about everything, because the thing about Daddy Issues is that they make it difficult to write about Daddies, especially if they are awesome. The person who writes The Cider House Rules is never going to be the person who writes [7th Heaven](#). Unless, of course, Moore and Eick are producing it, I guess. Which would be like the greatest show in the history of the universe. "Yes, okay. Lampkin can interview Six immediately, as long as it's conducted under the same conditions accorded to the chief prosecutor, all right?" Not that we've seen her. The way this trial is progressing, she'll show up somewhere in Season Seven, and we'll meet her three seconds before she becomes a serial murderer for no reason whatsoever. "... Meaning in the interrogation room. Not where you sleep," grumbles Adama. Which, if the best complaint you can offer about your son's tastes in jurisprudence is that it takes place in his bedroom, rethink the fact that you've crowded three ships' worth of civilians into one hangar bay and a newly built saloon. Also: one thing that is unsaid and kind of subtle in this episode is that once Romo mentioned the surveillance thing, it's in place for the rest of the episode (and calls to mind the creepiness of them spying on Gaius and Caprica all the time, even when they're jacking off) and makes Adama and Roslin that much scarier. At the risk of yet more Pynchon: "It can get pretty fascist in here."

Again with the emails. Look. If you think demanding excellence -- of yourself, of your peers, of a television show -- is "overreacting," I imagine that the day-to-day is very easy, if not that impressive or challenging. From where I'm standing, there's no reason not to try. There's never a reason to accept mediocrity. From yourself or from other people. I will never understand that lazy concept, that sometimes things...just suck. Why? Why should anything suck,

ever? Why am I insane for asking that question? What's the problem with asking a person, or a show, to perform to its own high standards? If my need for approval didn't get me up in the morning, my morbid fear of failure would do it instead. I don't know any other way to think or live, and if I find you confusing, or if you think I'm accusing you of evil witchcraft or even just settling for piss-poor episodes, that's why: I don't get it, and I don't want to get it. It's not about you, I don't know you. Saying that I hated an episode that you didn't mind isn't an attack on you, it's an attack on quality control. I'm not asking you to be more like me, but I am asking for the space to have an opinion. My opinion is that the show doesn't need to suck. There's not a certain number of shitty episodes that they hand out to each show at the beginning of the year, there's not a quota system for mediocrity. It's not a necessary part of the system, or the equation. Just because some episode of some other show you like also sucked is still no reason for that episode, or this episode, to suck. I would so rather you tell me the "Maelstrom" recap tried and failed, which in some respects I would agree, than for you to just shrug and say everybody writes a shitty recap from time to time. Everybody getting better, everybody trying harder, everybody rising, all the time, or else what's the point?

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Lee snits that since Adama's now on the tribunal, he can't be allowed to attend the depo. Which... is so cute, because the fact that Adama's now on the tribunal is SO MUCH MORE RETARDED AND EVIL than whether or not he's privy to any kind of counsel. It's not even OPPOSING counsel, because he's a judge -- and not to mention... you know what, whatever. It has to be this way, narratively, and I'm not going to bitch or lay that at poor Angeli's feet. I just think it's funny that they're going on and on about fairness and meanwhile the whole thing is such a radical kangaroo court monstrosity that they're having to overlook. Surely this could be more elegantly ignored. Roslin says that Lee has a point in leaving Adama out of the interview, and Bill tells her that there is absolutely no way: "I monitored the chief prosecutor's interview. Therefore, same conditions apply. In the interest of fairness."

I think something interesting happens here. Lee mentions again the documents they requested before, and it's Tory, the queen of

Plausible Deniability, the stealer of elections, that answers. "Yes, right, I apologize. We've had trouble locating the files. We'll have them delivered to you on the next run?" And there's something about the look that Laura gives her, right then, faster than a blink, that makes me wonder who's driving this bus, really. It's intriguing. I can definitely see the kind of passion for rightness turning on her again this way. One of the things I've always loved about this show is the [West Wing](#) feeling it gives me, which is hard to put into words and not something I've been interested in talking about, before now. But at this point in the story maybe it would be interesting. If not, skip away. My friend Alison is an attorney, and we talked a lot during law school about the idea of being an officer of the court, about the ideal that is represented (and failed over and over) by service to the people, by being involved in government. I've been queer for civics since I was little: the first time I voted, I addressed everybody as "Citizen" for the rest of the day. Lame but true. Law is a kind of religion: it lets you know when to stop and it regulates those behaviors we don't always control. That's the point of government, of course -- to keep you from eating other people's babies -- but to dedicate yourself, your skills and your mind, to that service is the highest calling an atheist patriot like myself can even handle. This is the reason I love this show so much -- not the God stuff and the Jung and the Tennyson stuff, I can do that any time, on any show, as I've demonstrated all over this website -- and why I get goofy about it. What is higher than that? What is higher than consecrating your life and the work of your hands to people you don't even know? Hard to talk about. I've been trying to talk about it the whole recap and I still haven't gotten there.

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But I do know that this calling lies also at the root of Lee, and of Tory, and of Laura. It's the shiny side of Laura's [manipulation of Chief](#) in "Dirty Hands," and it's the root of that entire episode: the impossible answers to the impossible questions that a love that fierce forces on you. These are your people. Your people. This terrible beauty is how the election was [stolen](#), and it's why they get so weird and passionate, and why [Laura's brief secession](#) was so complex. But I do believe it's a major part of Tory's whole deal, and if so, then I'm right about this scene, and that makes me sad. Anyway. ("That is the secret," Ernest said. "You must get to know the values.") Laura gives her this look like we don't do things like

that anymore -- except when we do, except when we justify it somehow, except when we stop demanding more of ourselves and our administration than we do of the people we serve -- and apologizes sincerely to Lee for the delay. She calls him "Major," and thanks him, and sends him on his way.

Caprica's cell, where Athena apparently hasn't brought any new clothes, but did manage to find Caprica's specific shade of lip gloss. As usual, she's a housecat and a shark at once, and so beautiful. Romo and Lee enter; Laura and Tory watch from outside, with Adama. Romo opens with "I understand that you had a romantic relationship with my client," and before you can breathe, she's off. "Gaius Baltar is a brilliant, gifted human being. In the time I've known him, he's made a sport out of mendacity and deception. He was narcissistic, self-centered, feckless, and vain. I'm the one who should have stabbed him." Outside, Laura nearly cracks a smile. "Things are... looking up." Romo considers her, and stop speaking English so he can speak the unspoken instead. Look between the lines. "Love. Precocious evolutionary move, fashioning Cylons to be capable of experiencing it. I don't know if it was engineered as a tactical imperative, but...it's not for the faint-hearted, is it?" No, it's God. And God is not for the faint of heart, and he knows it, and he knows that she knows it, and that's who he's talking to now: the woman who sacrifices herself for God, and for children, only those two, over and over and over. The woman who jumped ship for love a hundred times, who has had her heart broken on every Colony and planet and ship in the Fleet, for love and for the children, and for God. "Maybe you should've been nicer to your mechanic," he says. Oh, Romo. "Well. Perhaps Cylon love is not the same as human love. Perhaps it's designed to hurt a little less." Maybe Bill and Lee loved differently, and that's why they're dealing in such different ways with Kara's death. Because Romo's barely talking to Caprica at all, beyond the pretty simple goals he's set for himself in this interview. He's talking to Lee, and he's talking to Laura, and to Tory, and to Bill. And what he's saying now, to Lee and Bill, is this: there is a difference in the way you love, and your father, or son, is incapable of seeing over the walls of his grief, in order to care for you and help you to heal. It's never going to happen. You're on your own. Get out now: let him go, your son, and let him come unto me. Step away from your father, because I understand your pain.

"I loved a woman. Beautiful, beautiful woman. But so serious. This frowning face, trapped in the middle of a daisy. She had a way of walking. Processional, as if she were on her way to her own execution. We had ten years. Then it fell apart under its own weight." Under the atmosphere of a gas giant, invisible Heavy Raiders on the prowl, caught in the black hole of gravity, a life on the edge, a trajectory that started at Socrata's door and ended in the storm. "Is that what you wanted?" asks Caprica: does love end by choice? Are there things I could have done differently? Does he really hate me after all? Did Three take him away for good? She's on her own among the enemy, caged up and beautiful: **TheGreaterFool**, on the forums, mentioned something so smart and so sharp and hard that I got kind of winded, when I read it. The reason Caprica's still in her slinky dress, the reason her hair is perfect and her makeup and nails are done, the reason she's looking for all the world like a guest at Club Med and not a prisoner of war, is that the Pegasus is always with us, and Gina will always be with us, and the dead of Cloud 9, and if we thought about that for one second in these closing episodes, we'd never stop. Too big, too sad, too scary. So give the girl a martini and a hug, and stay focused on the trial, whoever's trial it turns out to be. Lee's, for now.

"I thought if I could get over her, I could get over anything. I could endure. Conquer. Be a man, stand up to any and all kinds of punishment. I clung to an empty, spinning bed for months." He has her with that. Her face darkens. Inside everything we say is secret animal language, speech from body to body. You never tell anybody your dreams because they're hearing everything you're not saying: her bed spins, empty, for months, she's weak, no longer enduring, scared and alone. He has her with that. And Lee: "And that... that was when I finally realized how much I loved her. If I needed all that strength, what was the point? I needed to be with her." That's two, maybe three. That's Lee and Caprica, in Romo's grasp. She fills in the blanks for herself. "Did he...ask about me? Gaius?"

Lampkin removes his shades, for the first time. He's the anti-Adama; he only looks you in the eye when he's lying. Watch: "He wanted to know if you were well. He wanted you to know that he misses you. Loves you. Because he can't be here to tell you, he



gave me this, to give to you." He produces the pen. "He uses that at the risk of grave reprisal to express his feelings, to put his world into some kind of recognizable order. To be heard. He kept it hidden, because he knows he will not get another. He wants you to have it. Because without you it has no meaning. He wants you to have it because he would do anything, anything to be with you again." That's twice: without you, it's nothing. Without you, he has no place to stand, he doesn't know who he is. You have all the power here, and he has none. And Lee: Kara's gone. And Bill: Kara's gone.

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Caprica smiles sadly, catching on a bit to Romo's emergent structures, the way he cages you with words and the silences between them. The unsaid: "Well, that's a shame, isn't it? Since they'll never let me keep it." But the words were never the point, for Gaius and for Romo: they use words to change perceived reality, like any magician. Like any messenger. "You understand that your days are owned and tallied by these people, the ones out there watching us. I think you realize what's likely to become of you." You are in the house of the enemy, and you will never leave it. You have left God and your people behind, and you have nobody to cling to but the person sitting in front of you, telling you everything you want to hear. Giving you everything he won't give you. Lee, are you listening? "I couldn't help you if they paid me ten times what they offered me for Baltar. You won't get a trial, not even a bad one. So...I have to ask you. Does your love hurt as much as mine?" All pain and all love, all those little apocalypses, are equal to the same amount; don't let anyone tell you different. Don't ever let somebody else's love overrule your own, and don't rely on the wondrous fascination of your own pain to ever get your way. He's pushing her to take the Cally option, and doing it in such a way that she can't refuse. Kara, Lee, Bill, Laura, Tory, Caprica: Stay inside your own pain. It matters more. You're all alone. I can help. Caprica stares at the pen, makes out with it a little. Now she has two dream Gaiuses, to keep her company. Two men that love her only.

"I feel like part of the world just fell down," says Laura. Bill, unable to deal with the words behind the words, notices he's missing a button, from his uniform. They're both right. Romo Lampkin wins.

Lee and Romo enter the pilots' rec room, and the guys scatter at the Major's greeting. Alone, Lee begins to wonder. To ask questions; to ask for Romo's words to redescribe the universe again, and tell him where to stand in it. A person who loves the rules as much as me and Lee, as much as Laura and Tory, fall apart when you take them away. "... Why encourage the man to write and then take his pen?" Romo nods easily. "It'll curry more sympathy when we get the word out that he's been silenced. Tyranny, gag orders... very sexy." Lee's getting it. It's like a virus, curling around his spine. He's a good boy. I love Romo, but I don't like this. "Alright, so you steal his pen, then you lie to him, then you lie to the Six?" Romo smiles in his sunglasses, gets vague. "The horror of the age. The great ugly material. The cloak of deceit." Trying to live up to Lampkin, Lee snarls cynically. It looks on him both ridiculous and heartbreaking. He's always needed a father: "The truth. Hmph. Kind of overrated, I guess. You know, when I was nine, maybe ten, my grandfather...he would wave me over. And he'd do this all the time. And then he'd say, uh, 'Lee, be a good boy. Just don't be too good.'" No such thing, Lee. I can't remember caring about him one way or the other, really, before now, beyond certain moments of adoration and the occasional bloodcurdling scream of frustration. But this is like somebody throwing up in your head. They say it all so lightly. "Everybody has demons," Lampkin laughs. "Them, Baltar, you, me. Even the machines. The law is just a way of exorcising them. That's what your father's father told me. You want to know why I hated him? Because he was right." Hop, hop, hop down the bunny trail: "So you hated him because he was right, and I hated the law because it was wrong. Because of what...of what it put him through. I mean, he defended the worst of the worst. I remember reading about him. The outrage. Helping murderers go free. What I don't understand is why he put himself through all that abuse." Don't you love how the concept of defense counsel is like blowing everybody's mind?

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"You think he gave a flying frak? Joe Adama cared about one thing. Understanding why people do what they do. Why we cheat our friends, why we reward our enemies. Why we go to war, sacrificing our lives for lost causes. Why we build machines in the hope of correcting our flaws and our shortcomings. Why we forgive, defying logic and the laws of nature with one stupid little

act of compassion." Translation: Michael Angeli wanted a job on the Caprica spinoff before it went belly-up. "We're flawed. All of us." So it's okay to fall down. "I wanted to know why, so I did what he did. I spend my life with the fallen. The corrupt. The damaged." Like Lee. He draws the line himself, in a way that Lee can't look away, can't help but admit that's he fallen, damaged. If "Black Market" existed on the record, and I swear on my life that I will do whatever it takes to keep that from being true, he'd be corrupt too. "Look at you, you were so ready to get on that Raptor with me today. The bad boy, the prodigal son." Lee feints to the usual place, the place he jumps a thousand times a day for justification: "No. I was just doing my job, protecting you." Then why, Lee, was your father acting completely crazy and out of character? If not to make you a "bad boy" and a "prodigal son"? (I really hate it when that term is misused like that, but I feel like at this point it's arguing the millennium, and we should just go with it. "Prodigal" now means "estranged," and not "wasteful," as it has previous to right now. I'm calling it: score one for semantic drift. I'll get you next time!)

What follows is an easy joke, but a good one, and well-acted: "Suddenly I'm handcuffed to a serial contrarian?" And Lee gives the obligatory "NO I AM NOT!" before realizing that things are ironic. I wish Bamber were a better actor, but any worries about his skill after the latest ebb were pretty much washed off by this episode. It just sucks that the two speech events in this episode that depended most on timing (this one and the Starbuck/Racetrack mistake in the briefing room) were his least effective moments in the episode. Both times he seems to anticipate his line right before he says it. The emotions scan, but the actual line readings don't, and it's a shame. But he looks really great this season, like way better than he's ever looked before. I'm working on always saying nice things along with the bad, but since I'm incredibly shallow that mostly ends up "But he's pretty!" or "But I like her shoes!" One day I'll figure out a balance. "My bed is made," says Lampkin, referencing their first conversation, the first time he moved into a little room in Lee's life. "I suggest you toil on your own. Now, if this cross-examination is over, I'd like to take a crap." Nice. He stands to leave, and Lee clears his throat. "Romo, that story that you told about the girl, the woman that you loved. Getting over her. Is it true? Hey! ... Was it true?" Romo admits that it's true, but that's

not the question. The question is: who's it true for?

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Outside Lampkin's apartment, the brimstone of his exit moments ago still wafting down the corridor, Figurski's got a box for him. "Files from Colonial One." I don't understand what anybody's job is anymore. The tiny weak kitten-hold I had on it is gone. Next week: LSO Kelly as the lunch lady. "Finally," Lampkin twinkles. "I thought I'd get all these after the trial was over." The Marine guards tell Figurski to put the box down for testing (smart, considering Figurski would have been like third on my list, after Cally and Seelix), and Figurski bitches and moans, of course, about how he was there "when Kelly x-rayed them." "It's papers," he [drink!]. The Marine picks up the box, now certified non-explody, and doing so he notices a tiny little screw on the floor. What seems like light years away, Romo's entering his personal code on his quarters' keypad, and somehow this Marine -- who may well be a Cylon from the eyeballs on him -- notices the missing screw from the pad. He shouts at Romo and crushes him to the floor; they're enveloped in the blast. Next season, watch for Romo acting squirrely and making out with an invisible Marine all the time.

(What an awesome idea I have just had!) In Sickbay, Romo's on an oxygen tube, but I'm guessing the Marine's dead, because that's what happened the last two bombings. Major Lee Stressed Out brings Lampkin his bag -- "before the hounds got to it," Lampkin leprechauns -- and Romo tells him to open it. Lee produces first Laura's Roslin's glasses, wonders if he's going over the edge right now or just in a little while, and gives Romo a confused look. "The President's glasses. She looks better without them." They... chuckle. This is one of those scenes that makes me less troubled by Lee or Lampkin or the content of the scene, and more troubled by Michael Angeli, because this conversation is creepy as hell but not in a way that furthers the plot. "They're serious. Serious catches on, in the courtroom," he explains, and Lee nods. Appearances. Deceit. And the button? "Your father's. From the deck. Right after you found the bomb underneath the Raptor. Here, kitty, kitty... heh. Ow. It was hanging by a thread." The President is serious; the Admiral is hanging by a thread. Lee's catching on, like a virus: "They tarnish so fast." The unspoken. "It was like that when I plucked it. Everybody else...Tigh, the others,

you...all shiny. The soldier in him has had enough for a while. He'll be glad to sit in that courtroom and fire his missiles there." One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh.

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Next: a sandal, from the co-ed bathroom. "Miss Prosecuting Attorney, down the hall. It's not what you think!" They both laugh in a way that two grown men would not normally laugh, because a normal person wouldn't be "thinking" what apparently in Angeli World you would "think" and then laugh about, which is that foot fetishes come to mind immediately whenever you see a shoe, or whatever's nasty and stupid and indicative of larger sex issues in play. "They were appropriated with the noblest of intentions. See the soles? See how the soles are worn." In this way Romo Lampkin describes a universe; see how Apollo learns who to be now. "She drags her feet." Miss Prosecuting Attorney drags her feet, the Admiral hanging by a thread. And Lee? Just hollowed out. "You're catching on!" It's when he says it out loud that's most chilling. Lee asks about the rest of the crap in the bag, but doesn't think to ask why Romo's showing it to him.

"... My demons. I borrow things. My parents disappeared when I was nine years old. They were kidnapped. Murdered for...for the money they had on them, which wasn't enough. I went to live with an uncle, stole from him until I could run away." Then he became the Batman, or Peter Pan, or any other self-made individual who has no parents at all. Just like Lee likes to picture himself: an orphan in a Fleet made of orphans, made up of a race of orphans, he's still special. It's only him against the forces of chaos. Him and this strange magpie of a man. "So what did you take from me?" Nothing you can see. Nothing you know about, from this sad angle. "I was thinking... the photograph that you carry. The girl, the pilot. The one you're carrying." They already took that. "But you've had enough stolen from you already." Lee nods, and gives Romo another of his chess pieces: you admit I loved her the most. You see the truth behind my strong façade. You see the boy inside the Lee Suit. "I'll try and get these back to her," Lee says, motioning with the glasses. Like he still hasn't noticed that this is wildly fucked up in every direction. He turns to go and Lampkin stops him. "The other pocket. At the back."

Gaius's pen. Lampkin gave it to Caprica knowing it would be

confiscated, stole it back from the guards, and now he's returning it to Gaius. From himself. From the man who gave him his voice back, his only true supporter, the only man who has told him, aloud, that the writing is a good thing. That he can buy back his soul through his manifestos and operating manuals. That dissolving himself in a puddle of critique and proletarian theory is the last and final way for him to be a hero, for him to save the Fleet; this time, from itself, for once, rather than from a man named Gaius Baltar. Saul Tigh should write a poem about Romo Lampkin. Maybe [he already did](#).

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"We still have a case pending. If you want to help, if you dare help ... get this to my client." Lee wonders if they really do, and Romo coughs. "I have a calling. Eh, it's all the ringing in my ears tells me." The ringing in his ears, like Seelix's; the calling, like Seelix's. Like Lee's, now that he's answering. The final item takes Lee's breath away. "... Okay, you better explain this," he says, shaking with adrenaline. It's a detonator or something, a part we've seen on the other bombs. Romo says he doesn't know what it is, but Lee does. His voice is harsh: "Where'd you get it?" From the guy that "scolded you like a schoolboy," Romo says. "Frakkin' with your head. What's-his-name; Mr. Serious." All in terms of Lee, of what he did to Lee, of why Lee is currently angry and powerless and sad: what they took away, the power that was lost, the LSO lording it over the CAG. He's good. "... Uh, Kelly," he says, like he's barely heard the name. Little does he know that Kelly's been popping up all over the ship for no reason, in like every scene he doesn't belong in, so we'll recognize him at the big reveal in a second that makes no sense.

Lee's stricken, and we cut to the pilots' bunks, where Lee is going all Homicide and slapping bomb parts around and getting in Kelly's face. I... don't know what to do with this. You figure it out, or what it means, or how it happens, because I'm willing to admit that I might just be blind to the point here, because it seems an awful lot like Dr. Robert's [excuse that made no sense](#) a few weeks ago.

**Kelly:** I never would've let Athena go airborne with you on the Raptor. I would've stopped it, you know that. **Apollo:** Yeah, I know that. **Kelly:** You better lock me up. And I don't want any



trial. I won't stop, I will keep trying. I'll keep at it, I will. I did my job, sir. And I have done my job for two years now. Every day I sent people out to fight. I cleared them all to die. So many people...I just got tired of living with that. You ask that man if you had to choose between giving his life up for a Cylon or a human, what do you think he'd say? I had to do something.

I mean... what does any of that mean? "Fighter pilots die, like Starbuck died for example. This makes me hate my job, because I am confused about the words 'war,' 'fighter' and 'pilot.' Also the word 'job,' and also what it is that I do exactly, which is not what I am saying it is\*. Somehow, this has to do with Gaius Baltar, because he is not a pilot, and therefore I am blowing up lawyers. I am also blowing up some pilots, like Sharon, because it's sad when pilots get blown up. But not lawyers. But I hate my job, and plus I am crazy now and a serial killer, and will continue to blow up lawyers, and Sharon, to save the pilots from getting blown up, unless I'm the one blowing them up."

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(\*This one, I'll give him a pass, because who the hell knows anymore. Helo will probably be LSO and the lunch lady next week, in addition to being a pilot, the Mayor of Dogsville, and Ombudsman for the Lower Four Colonies and the District of Whatthefuck.)

Adama's office for another round of "Dial 'A' For Adama," in which Bill Adama presents us with a completely new personality every five seconds, because he has no internal motivation, because we're strapping on the Apollo Suit and only one character in the scene has a personality or definable goals at any given time, and everybody else is set dressing. And speaking of set dressing, check out the totally demolished model ship in the background for this entire scene. Pretend it means what you think it means, because in this episode you take what you can get, and at least the director's not terrible at his job.

So Bill's on the phone telling Tigh (or whoever the XO might be at this moment) to reinstate Lee as the CAG, then welcoming him back like somebody else was the one that demoted him to Garibaldi. In a way, it was: the Adama From Five Seconds Ago. "I'm sorry. Because I was wrong, and...I made it worse." Made

what worse? The grieving? I didn't see any grieving. The Admiral tries to say that Lee should be back in his element, getting over his losses and adjusting to life, but Lee is SO not having that. "I think I should be with Lampkin!" And my grandfather, and whoever else you hate! "Well, now that we know that it was Kelly, we can ease up a little bit on security," says Adama. Because things normally go so well in the Fleet, what with people not turning into serial killers for no reason every couple weeks. "In his condition," which is on a crutch, which is awesome, because Romo Lampkin is like the Colonial Johnny Cochran with the props -- think what he'll do with the crutch! -- Lee thinks Lampkin needs help preparing the his case. Adama reverts back to the beginning of the episode to say that Roslin's looking for aides that can do that. "Dad, why not me? I'm close to the case, I've read the documents. I understand Lampkin's strategy..." You bet you do. Like a cancer in your mind. "We have things under control. Lampkin will have help." Lee reiterates that he wants to do this, and Adama goes nuts some more and makes no sense. "You're a CAG, you're not a lawyer." But until five seconds ago, he wasn't a CAG either, and there's no deep meaning for that, it's just dumb and overly complicated and silly. "What, and you're a judge?" asks Lee, once again sidestepping that it's not professional experience that makes the Admiral a bad choice for the tribunal, but the simple fact that he's the head of the military and one of the two leaders of the Fleet, which is made up of people who have survived like ten of Baltar's attacks that destroyed all but 40,000 people in the entire human race. "No, but like the four other men picked, I'm capable of listening to the evidence and making an ethical decision." Yeah, until this episode I would have agreed, now I don't know what to think anymore. Lee draws a parallel: "And I'm capable of helping Lampkin." Adama tells him to forget it and says he needs him as CAG. Or, you know, Helo, or anybody else that's available and not currently a serial killer. Or any one of a number of dead girls.

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**Adama:** Forget it. I need you as CAG.

**Apollo:** Why did you give me those books, huh? I mean, you gave me your father's law books.

**Adama:** I made a mistake.

**Apollo:** Why? Why is it a mistake? Are you afraid that I'll be like him?

**Adama:** You're a pilot.

**Apollo:** And with Zak gone, and Kara gone, you needed someone to carry the flag, is that it?

**Adama:** You're a pilot. You're a pilot and you're my son. And I will not look across that court and see you sitting on the other side.

**Apollo:** See me? Or see someone else.

**Adama:** Report for duty.

**Apollo:** Is that an order?

**Adama:** You're in way over your head. Report for duty.

**Apollo:** Is that an order?

**Adama,** taking his glasses off, making no sense: I'm through giving you orders.

Am I an idiot? How am I unable to make even basic sense of this shit? "You're not the CAG, you're the head of security. STOP ACTING LIKE ROMO LAMPKIN or so help me God I'll make you CAG again." Please, sir, do not give me my job back. "Then I'll hate your grandfather some more!" But sir, what about Zak and Kara? Can't I bring them up for no reason? They were both pilots and died in the air, just like you don't want me to do! "Go die in an airplane or I will be really mad!" But I have a calling to serve, which you and Roslin have now given to me and then taken away again sixteen times. "I HAVE NO IDEA HOW THE LEGAL SYSTEM WORKS! IF YOU ARE SITTING AT THE DEFENSE TABLE AND I AM MAKING AN ETHICAL DECISION BASED ON THE FACTS, I WILL HAVE TO FIGHT YOU SOMEHOW!" No, you won't. "GO DIE IN AN AIRPLANE! BECAUSE I LOVE YOU! KARA THRACE IS DEAD! DEAD!" Is that an order? "NO! THE COMMANDER OF THE FLEET DOES NOT GIVE ORDERS TO HIS SUBORDINATES! GO BE A LAWYER LIKE I JUST TOLD YOU NOT TO! "

Adama goes into CIC and tells them to take Lee off the board and reinstate Helo as CAG. "My son has more important things to tend to," he says, and I can't tell if he's reached the Bitchy stage of grieving, or if he's continuing to be surreal for no goddamn reason.

Hall of Remembrance: Lee finally puts up Kara's picture. Sam comes crutching in, out of nowhere (Apollo Suit!) and sees the photo. Apollo asks about his broken leg, but doesn't ask what the hell Sam does all day, or where he lives, or why he was stumbling around drunk in a classified area earlier this episode, or any of

the things I'd ask him before resorting to talking about the weather and drinking injuries. Starting with, "You wanna fool around, or... ?" Sam calls it his "lucky break," because being on crutches -- which he still is -- meant that he didn't have to come to the Hall of Remembrance and look at the photo of his dead wife and take part in a ritual that holds ZERO MEANING FOR HIM, because A) only the pilots seem to use it these days, and B) post-9/11 he wasn't lighting candles on Galactica, he was lighting bombs on Old Caprica, and C) Apollo Suit, whatever whatever. Sam calls him "Lee" again, with no laughter in it, and they nod. Lee leaves Sam alone with her picture, and he touches it.

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In the brig, Gaius hops around like that merry wanderer of the night in a community theatre presentation of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and finally angles himself down to the envelope on the floor. Inside, slightly the worse for wear, is that goddamn pen, and a note from Lampkin. Which he reads as we hear Lampkin's voiceover: "There is no greater ally, no force more powerful, no enemy more resolved than a son who chooses to step from his father's shadow. -- Romo Lampkin." The resulting apoplexy of douche-toolish self-obsession -- too many egos, too small a space, Romo quoting himself, Gaius being all writer guy now, Angeli doing a bang-up job as usual -- causes the entire episode to run backwards from itself and then explode at the very beginning, like it never happened. Yet even still it bends time and space to avoid getting the fuck over itself.

Yeah, I just found a note on my office floor, it goes like this: "There is nothing more poignantly ill-advised, no narrative tremor too pronounced, no pile of bullshit too unready for primetime, that it won't be signed off on with Michael Angeli's name on the cover, because he is holding an NBC executive's family hostage. -- This Stupid Fucking Episode." But I don't know what it means!

Next week, as I've been saying all season: THE TRIAL OF GAIUS BALTAR! Written by the guy who brought you "[Collaborators](#)," "[Lay Down Your Burdens, Part II](#)," "[The Eye Of Jupiter](#)," "[A Day In The Life](#)," and (cough) "[Black Market](#)." I'm thinking it's going to be awesome and probably pretty crazy; Verheiden also means that it will be serviceable-to-brilliant, depending on the director, and have the input of Moore and Eick and the whole room, meaning

that it'll be big ideas and lots of cool scenes at the least. And I'm guessing there will be a lot of setup for all the wild cliffhangers we've come to expect in our finales. I just hope it won't have the Part One flab we've also come to expect, but I'm not that worried. It'll certainly feel like BSG again, rather than another Iron John & Easy Rider night at Neal Cassady's house. I'm pretty pumped; I'm asking Joe to do the recaplets here on out. So til Sunday, pass me the magic drum or some shit, because I gotta whine about my Dad for awhile. Boom boom boom.

# THAT OLD SONG THEY USED TO PLAY

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 19 | Aired on 03.17.2007

*Crossroads, Part I* - Everybody goes both politically and personally nuts as hallucinations abound, civil liberties take the long walk, Baltar's trial finally begins, and everything starts moving at once.

**Recaplet:** Okay, so...do you have a spare three hours so I can tell you what happened in this episode? First off, we find out that, yes, the Cylons are still following close behind the fleet. Roslin, who's been having gold-tinted dreams about Sharon and Hera and Six, suggests asking Six for help, and it's Tigh who gets sent to do the asking. Six's ChipGaius-assisted attempts to bond with Tigh over how they've both loved and lost is both ill-advised and awesome, the latter being because they punch the hell out of each other. On the bright side, she does willingly share that the Cylons are following a radiation signal emitting from a fuel ship. On Lee's suggestion, Adama sends the fuel ship off course to lead the Cylons astray.

The following people, meanwhile, are freaking the hell out: (1)Tigh, who keeps hearing a phantom radio signal playing The Song Of I Had To Kill My Wife, gets heroically blitzed just in time to testify at Baltar's trial, and gets goaded by Lampkin into admitting he killed Ellen. (2) Tory, who tries to strong-arm Baltar's prosecutor, snaps at the press, shares A Look with Anders (cannot wait to see what comes of that), and is eventually told by Laura to shape up and brush her hair. Seriously. (3)Lee. See, Lee figures out that Roslin's back on the chamalla (hence the trippy dreams) and agonizes over handing this information, which would impeach her testimony against Baltar, to Lampkin. But after having another blowup with Dad and quitting the military in one heck of a snit, Lee cross-examines Roslin himself and brings up how she went all religious fanatic two seasons ago while on the junk. He gets her to admit to taking chamalla again -- after several painful reminders of the Laura/Lee friendship that actually drew this recapper into the show in the first place -- but she also reveals why: her cancer's back. This, by the way, THIS is what finally gets Dualla to leave Lee. Hey, whatever works.

Also, Gaius has apparently garnered a reputation among the plebes of the Fleet as a faith healer, which I'm sure will lead to nothing good next week. And we act out on Crazy Tigh



"discovering" that the crazy-making radio frequency is coming from inside the walls of the ship. I have no idea what that's supposed to mean.

**Recap:** Previously, Tom told Laura that Gaius's tribunal would be the death of us all, but she didn't want to be his girlfriend anymore anyway because she already had two of those. Tory acted sketchy as shit, and previous to this, she and Dualla, among others, tried to fix the election. Another one of those, Saul Tigh, has been edging ever closer to becoming an actual no-shit salty-dog sea pirate, but has not as yet crossed the line. Sam tried to make friends. Lee cried for two whole weeks about losing his boyfriend, then bent over for the creepiest old guy he could find to call him "son," just like retarded twinkies have been doing since the first gay caveman invented house music. (Vocal by Kylie Minogue, strangely enough, which helps with my theory that she's one of the Final Five.) Roslin was making scarier and scarier decisions, because she had to; Saul poisoned Ellen and she accepted gratefully, because they had to; Adama clipped his son's wings after Kara died, because he had to.

Previous to that, Laura Roslin received visions from the Gods, and they pointed the way to Earth, and they caused a division in the Fleet that took months of pain and death to repair; those that followed her dreams of hope knelt down, and she walked among them, laying her hands on them and blessing them, as a prophet. Now, Gaius Baltar has walked among the enemy, and learned to think like them, and brings a new kind of hope, a new way to lay down burdens, and rest. It's not the first time he's tried it. He's causing a division in the Fleet that may never be repaired, the roots of which stretch back two years, and ten thousand more before that.

Previously, Gaius Baltar won the election, and Tory and Dee (and Saul) tried to take it away from him. He won by the Fleet's decision, because they wanted to go home. He won because he needed to win, and he screwed Gina, Laura, Lee and Bill in the process, and these were all equal for him, because he needed to win. As a result, Cloud 9 was lost, and the Cylons came to New Caprica and forced a surrender, and by the time humanity was freed almost 6,000 people had died. As a direct result. And when the Cylons came, and their oppression increased, so did the force of revolution, and the stakes got higher, and the losses greater.

Duck murdered 200 people at the SS graduation; Three forced Gaius to order 200 executions in turn, including Tom Zarek and Laura Roslin. It was only a technicality, an existential ass-cover, but what it took from Gaius, and Gaeta, still hasn't been recouped. Laura and Tom lived, and Hera lived, and Cally, and the Chief, and Tory and Saul and Kara and Sam. Ellen died, though. And Maya.

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Now, Laura Roslin is beautiful. She stands in a gold room, wearing a green dress with a kimono collar. It's the Kobol Opera House, last seen freaking you out with God and before that freaking you out with Crazy Six Baby Math. She walks down the corridor, and spots a little girl, running, her face hidden, wearing a cute Madeline dress and chuckling quietly as she goes. It's Hera -- Hera grew legs, you guys! -- wearing a little hat. Laura's bewilderment turns to anxiety, and she begins to chase the child, but Hera's always one step ahead. Across the gallery, across a long, swelling staircase, Laura sees someone else: Sharon Agathon, in uniform; Hera's mother. That's three, bound by miraculous blood and ugly atrocities. If Bill sees Athena as a daughter now, then what is she to Laura? There's competition in the air. Laura and Sharon break, for the stairs, and make their way down together, apart. At the foot of the stairs, Hera stands for a moment, and breaks away. She runs into the arms of a Six. God's house, with a child at stake: it's got to be Caprica. This is Laura, and the women she's imprisoned. All of them made to love, and to be loved in return. The mother of the child, the maiden who loves children, and the crone, who took her away. And in the center of it all, as always: Hera. Starbuck should have been here for this. I don't know how we make it work without her. The mother and the crone stare, as the maiden Caprica takes the shape of things to come into her arms, and steps across the anteroom of Heaven, into the light.

Laura awakes, shaking, gasping; on the threshold of revelation.

On CIC, they're repairing and refueling the Fleet, just three more jumps to the Ionian Nebula -- which is where the nova was telling them to go. No sign of the Cylons, for now, in pursuit: they've left a trailing Raptor every time they've jumped, and so far nothing. "No dradis contacts, no sightings, nothing." The Admiral tells

Gaeta to tell the last Raptor to wait an additional six hours, before catching up. There's something in the air, I think -- I would imagine out of all of them, the individual ingredients of doom in the bouquet of fear become quite distinct. He knows something's up, inside the Fleet and out, even if he doesn't know what it is.

At Joe's Bar they're dealing, pulling it together: the pilots play Pyramid, Saul Tigh drinks and tunes a radio. Skulls calls Sam Anders a nugget (!) and they shout. Tigh comes closer and further from the signal, through the static, straining to hear. Anders and Seelix face off on the tiny impromptu court; without even turning to look at Tigh, Sam points one finger: "There. Go back. You almost had it." They don't look at each other, but they both know what they're talking about: the sound across the water. It's awesome, the way it's shot and acted: the way they act in concert, on the same side that nobody else can see. Seelix is confused. "That song," Sam explains. "You don't hear that song?" She doesn't. They shake it off, they keep playing. Tigh keeps listening.

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On Colonial One Tory meets with Cassidy, the one-sandaled prosecutor. Tory's intense, and not looking quite as lovely as she did last week; there's a hardness, a roughness we're not used to. She and Maya were the prettiest under-40s on New Caprica: what is going on here? "Baltar was instrumental in the Cylon attack on the Colonies," Tory Foster harshes out. "The President wants him charged with genocide." Cassidy knows damn well she can't make that stick. There's no evidence at all. Tory shakes her head: "The President saw him with one of the Sixes on Caprica. Before the attacks." So, Cassidy sums up, Tory wants her to put Laura on the stand "to testify about her drug-induced visions." Do not talk that shit to Tory Foster, girl! You'll get airlocked! Tory's two modes are Normal, and Laura/Tory Lockdown. They had to be. For a year and a half, they had to be. "What we want is for you to do your job, and convict him." It gets worse. That's already worse than it should be: it gets worse. "If you can't do that, we'll find someone who will." Tory's lost. If you can't decide who you're going to be, if you can't keep the law safe from your own fear and love and anger, then you're controlled by something darker. That's what we're looking at here: can you love the law enough, can you love the Fleet enough, to stay the person you agreed to

be? Even Laura can't be around for this; even Laura's terrifying will won't crack at the places Tory's cracking. Again. "This is a courtesy meeting, not a strategy session. I am charging Baltar with what I can prove." Tory looks down at her, all angles and planes. "Of course," Cassidy says, realizing this is a standoff, "I do serve at the pleasure of the President. And if she decides to replace me, I'm sure there are other lawyers willing to take up the case." She leaves, and out the door implies the finger: "If there are any other lawyers." Let's ask Captain Kelly!

A woman comes to Baltar's cell, small and intense; when he sees her press pass he begs her to leave. She's bashful and amazed, in his presence. "Dr. Baltar, I-- I want you to look at this picture. This is my son. He's sick, and I want you to bless him." Gaius's eyes pop out of his head: even for him, this is a bit too much. He calls for the guards, promising her he's no God: "The God, or God of any derivation thereof..." I wouldn't be too sure about that last one, Gaius. He apologizes as she continues to beg: "I don't have any special powers." Nor that. He begs for privacy: "I'm on trial! For my life?" She swears that she believes in him, and he's flattered, and as they rush her away he pretends to be offended, to be aghast, but he's not, really. Nobody has ever believed in him before -- at least, not when he didn't believe in himself even more strongly. He takes the photo; she swears that he can save him. "I'll do my best," he says, putting on a face for the Marines. Once he's alone with the photograph, our song begins to play.

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"How many is that now?" asks Chip Six, a smile on her face. That's five. "Not including the thirty or forty who've written letters," she grins, scary, and he nods. He walks a line between wanting to believe and wanting to appear above belief; he switches back and forth between the Gods and the God, between atheism and prophecy. Whatever makes him look least silly, at any given time: "Well. I suppose it can't be helped. Celebrity trials invariably bring out the crazies." But Six knows better: Six always knows better. Six always knows how he'll twist and turn, how you give him the rope to hang himself with. How you tell him the words to explain it to himself; the inner dialogue he can repeat over and over until he believes again. He's strong, blameless, a hero: this is what he needs. "So you think they're crazy? See, I saw a woman in pain. I saw a woman who can see you more

clearly than you can see yourself. Even if they kill you," she nearly whispers, "Your name will live on forever." Even if it was going to do that anyway, it's heavy stuff, especially for a man like this. When you don't know where you're standing, all you have are the whispers in your ear; he's a lot like Lee right now. I wonder how much Six had to say about this Marxist revolution?

Racetrack and Skulls sit in trailing position, in good old 289er. CIC tells her to have fun watching their asses; Racetrack tells Tigh to have fun watching Baltar's ass get nailed in turn. Twelve hours total, waiting on the enemy that never comes; "like bait on a hook," Skulls describes it. She laughs and they deal: twelve hours of Triad and then home.

"How do we measure loss?" Cassidy searches the faces of the tribunal: Adama, Franks (Tigh's real-life wife!), three other ship captains. They are not yet bored. "How do we measure loss? We measure it in the faces of the dead. The faces that haunt our memories and our dreams. How do we measure loss? We measure it in our own faces. The ones we see in the mirror every day. Because it has marked each of us. So how do we measure loss? When the scale of it becomes too hard to absorb any other way, we use numbers. How many killed. How many maimed. How many missing. And when those numbers become too vast to comprehend, as they did two years ago, we had to turn it around. We began to count the living." She turns to a whiteboard (!) and begins the cold equations.

"Those of us who survived to continue the saga of the human race: 44,035. The sum total of survivors from the Twelve Colonies who settled on New Caprica with President Gaius Baltar as their leader and protector." (This number actually includes the ~4,800 people who stayed in orbit, no matter what she says or implies.) "38,838: Our number the day after we escaped." (This number doesn't include the ~2,600 military personnel in the Fleet, based on the survival count for "[Collaborators](#)." You know I could give a fuck, but it's like, dude, you're writing a show with a serious Asperger's contingent, second only to like [Lost](#) -- think you could not send them screaming? Actual whiteboard, with actual numbers, which actual viewers obsess over every week. Come on. On the other hand, I'm so sure that they fought this out in the writer's room, or at least Taylor did some double-checked math on this, so it's presumably just another way of looking at them. Or

Cassidy's as dirty as the rest of us. However: that means that around 5,523 were lost between Cloud 9 and the Year in Baltar's Hair, and only 2,592 died during the Occupation and Second Exodus: she's right by being wrong, because actually that's 8,115 people he's killed in the last two years alone -- besides, you know, almost the entirety of humanity. But given the charges, she can only indict based the civilian casualties of the Occupation and Second Exodus, so I guess that's where her numbers ultimately come from, and they're not that far off.) She subtracts one from the other: "And the missing number, the one that no one wants to face. 5,197. 5,197 of us killed, left behind, or simply disappeared. 5,197 of all that remains of the human race. Lost."

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Her voice goes out across the Fleet; the people nod. She's getting them. "The citizens of the Twelve Colonies entrusted their fates and the lives to Gaius Baltar. What we received was a reign of terror that staggers our minds and breaks our hearts." We linger over the tylium refinery, the fuel that keeps the Fleet jumping, the belts keep rolling, under dirty hands: "Instead of governance, we got tyranny. Instead of justice, we got oppression." Wait, who are we talking about? What were we talking about again? "Instead of a president, we got a murderer."

Back to the trial. "Today, humanity holds him accountable for his crime. Gaius Baltar is not a victim. Gaius Baltar chose to side with the Cylons and to actively seek the deaths of his fellow citizens. For that...he must pay the ultimate price." Cassidy cedes the floor, and Lampkin begins his opening statement, using his crutch like a champ. "Your honors, the defense would like to change our plea to guilty."

The gallery murmurs; Gaius chokes. Franks is not amused. "What choice do I have? I mean, it's obvious my client is guilty. He's a traitor and a killer. He's no better than the Cylon, and what do we do with them?" A man in the gallery (or Mary McDonnell doing a very gruff voice) shouts, "Throw 'em out the airlock!" That word still makes me giggle in this context, and the voice is kind of hysterical and shouty anyway, and though I do love the law, not even jurisprudence can stop the church giggles once they get going. Lampkin stomps his cane. "That's right! Throw 'em out the airlock! This man sold us to our enemy. This man is our enemy."



And if there's one thing that's good in war, that is right and just and proper, it's slaughtering our enemy! Getting some righteous payback! What are we waiting for? Let's just kill him now!" Guns in the temple. He turns back to the tribunal, his voice moderate: "It'd be easier, wouldn't it? Simpler. Justice of the mob. It's what they want." Your people: these are your people. What they want is revenge: do you give it to them? Do you lay yourself down before that, in them and in you, or are you worthy of your position?

Laura Roslin enters, and seats herself in the stands. "Especially her," he says, pointing. "She's been wanting this for over a year now, ever since he beat her in a free and fair election of the people. Now she gets a chance to exact her revenge upon a man whose only real crime is bowing to the inevitable! Gaius Baltar saved the lives of the people on New Caprica -- where Laura Roslin would've seen us all dead, victims of a battle we had no hope in winning! I don't know about you, but I'm glad she wasn't the president when the Cylons arrived and said, 'Surrender, or die.' I owe my life to Gaius Baltar and the decision he made that day. And so does Laura Roslin." And he's right by being wrong: if Laura Roslin were President, they'd never have settled. That was the point of the election. But the higher point of all elections is something she schemed to take away, and only a last-minute save from Bill kept her and Tory from going there. This whole season is just one question: when you preserve humanity, what are you preserving? When you put guns in the Temple, when you steal the election, when you kick Cavil dying in the dirt, when you toss Jammer out the airlock. When you co-opt the judiciary, when you tell Chief he matters, when you tell a woman her child has died, and send her out into the Fleet. When you look your father in the face and tell him you're doing this because you love the law. You're killing somebody for stealing a box with nobody inside, and that's not war. That's getting lost and needing desperately to find your way home. The Pegasus is with us still, and only something massive and unexpected could ever save them now. This whole season is just one question: why do you do the things you do, and how strong can you let yourself be, in the name of what is right?

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Raptor 289, trailing: Racetrack informs Skulls that she, like

Hotdog before her, is well aware of the masturbatory habits of her fellow pilots. "That's called self-healing!" Skulls protests. That's exactly what it is. They laugh and turn to their consoles; five baseships jump into the sky. Racetrack screams as her ECO spins up the FTL. There's a beautiful, just amazing, shot of 289er jumping out just as a missile reaches her location.

On CIC, Adama's stressing â his first thought is that they've somehow placed a tracking device on one of the ships, during the Occupation. Roslin suggests asking Caprica, and Tigh scoffs, but Roslin's sure she'll help: "She does not want to see Hera go back to the Cylons." As a nation, the Cylon have every right to Hera, every right the humans claimed â that's the nature of being a "half-breed whelp," as Tigh calls her: you live in both worlds. Like Gaius, like Sharon. Like Caprica, now. She belongs to Sharon and Helo, sure, but that didn't matter when Roslin kidnapped her any more than it did to Three and Gaius Baltar. So for Caprica to come across with Athena, and bring her to the humans, to save the future from her own people: that's the jump she's been waiting to make. God and children. "I have a feeling she'd lay her life down for it," Roslin says. A feeling? And in the immortal words of Boston and my friend Wyatt playing Guitar Hero: "It's more than a feeling." It's the threshold of revelation. It's the map home. It's the shape of things to come. Roslin and Adama hustle away for a sidebar, and Lee watches them; moving slow, he sniffs Roslin's teacup, stunned by the bitterness. Laura and Bill return, and Adama sends Saul Tigh to question Caprica. "With pleasure!" he says. Lovely.

Tigh enters her room with a contingent of Marines. "The President, Gods bless her sunny optimistic soul, thinks you might want to share how your buddies have been tracking us. So I'm here to ask the question, and listen to your lies." She's languid at first; tired. In the last fight, the Cylon discovered that the fueling ship has a unique radiation signature; they must be tracking it somehow. Saul gets a little salty in the brogue, asking what other secrets are "rattling around" in her "mechanical brain." What other songs she hears across the water. It's the angel that answers, for starters. "Don't be intimidated by him," says Chip Gaius, bringing sexy back as usual. "He's just using you to exorcise his own pain." That's all they're ever doing. "Poor old sod, he lost someone close to him. Oh, you know how that feels, don't you?" That's all she knows. "I know a lot of things," she

says. She does. She stands. The housecat leaves and the shark comes in; this is the Six that asks if you're alive. This is the Six that takes ovaries, the Six that never really thought Eight was all there. The Six that brought down vengeance on Gaius, the night Hera died. "You want to know one thing I know?" she asks Saul. "I know about your loss. Hurts, doesn't it? You wonder how you can even survive it." He's onto her, tells her it's not going to work, but it is, and nobody knows that better than Chip Gaius: "She was his world. Of course, he only realized when she was gone." She looks Saul in the eye, unwavering, scary, doing this wrong. Still a Cylon, not enough human. This is Chip Gaius failing at the immediate, getting us ready for the long term. "Did she know? Did she know how much she meant to you? Or did you wait to tell her till she was gone?" Almost. Almost gone. "Bet you made her think that she was a burden. A millstone around your neck. But then you humans always destroy the ones who love you, don't you?" Her head spins nearly around, sickening, as he bashes her one across the face. She nearly grins as she smashes back; it's fairly fucking awesome, this scene. But now the interview's over, the shackles return, Tigh heads for some serious drinking, and Six wonders how you pop a jawbone back.

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Saul's wavering on the stand, eye at half-mast, so Cassidy repeats the question: "As the leader of the insurgency, did you ever hear of an instance in which Baltar stood up to the Cylons or tried to disrupt their plans?" How could he have? Nobody heard directly from Gaius, or the administration, in the entire time of the Occupation. Like Laura before and after him, he had buffers out to here. But that doesn't ever stop the people from filling in the blanks; it's what the people do best. Human psychology is based on projection. "Oh, no! Never. He never lifted a frakkin' finger to help us. Ellen did more. At least she was trying to... to help us..." It's clear he's drunk; to the people that love him, to Lee and Bill and Laura, and you and I, it's clear. "Yeees," Cassidy says, "yes, Ellen. Your wife. Another victim of Baltar's Cylon allies." She gets the hell out of there. Before standing, Romo asks Lee what happened there, so we can be sure Lee doesn't know what really happened. So we can see Romo putting it together for himself. "She used to work for one of the Cylon administrators," Lee explains. "I presume she died in the exodus from New Caprica." Lampkin nods, and stands, and goes for it.

"You dislike Gaius Baltar because you consider him to be a traitor. Is that correct?" That, and a coward, and a mass murderer, yes. "The suicide bombing of the police graduation. Gaius Baltar was the intended target, was he not?" Again, yes: "And if he'd had the guts to show up that day like he was supposed to, you and I wouldn't be having this conversation right now." Heh. "So," Lampkin summarizes, "you ordered the killing of, what was it, thirty-three other men and women, just for the chance to kill Gaius Baltar?" But Tigh's been through this a million times: they were all traitors. The whole SS. "Anyone who put on that uniform." Lampkin turns on his heel, like a boy. "What happened to your wife?" Cassidy takes exception to this, asking the relevance of Ellen, but Lampkin and the tribunal -- excepting, of course, Bill Adama, who's even worse at objectivity here than we thought he would be -- agree that the door was opened during her questioning. He asks again, and Tigh begins to curse at him. "Isn't it true that she collaborated openly with the Cylons? That she actually worked for them?" If by "working," you mean the twist and swirl: "She was faking it. Making them think that she was working for them." But then, Lampkin points out, you wouldn't say Gaius was faking it, either. And that's not what he was doing, in any way except the one Lampkin needs. Maybe these military types, these survivors, these orphans, just honestly cannot understand how weak the man truly is. Admitting his humanity would tarnish their own.

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"And you blame him for her death... Have you been drinking today, Colonel?" Long shot on Bill, Tigh in the foreground, tricks with focus: "I had a drink. I haven't been drinking." Lampkin surmises that Saul used to drink with Ellen. He can't know the glory of it, though, the way their loved burned so hot. He can't understand what he means, what he's saying, when he says they used to drink. Tigh loses a bit of composure and the camera follows, swanning off sideways. The static and the sound, across the water: "You hear that? They're playing music in here now?" Not looking good for the prosecution, there. "Gaius Baltar didn't order the death of your wife, Colonel. That was somebody else." That was Sam Anders, recent widower, recent cuckold, newborn nugget. That was Colonel Saul Tigh, constant murderer, recent poet, constant cuckold, newborn... what? What music is he hearing? "Who was it, Colonel? Who killed Ellen? Come on,

Colonel, we're waiting. Tell us. Who was it? Who killed Ellen?" He breaks, on the rocks. Runs aground. Begins to sing. "I did. I did. I did. She was giving information to the Cylons. A lot of good men died. She was my wife. It was my responsibility. She did it for me. That's what she said, to save me from going back to prison, so they could tear more pieces off me." His eye, traded in for something new. Something we aren't at the correct angle to see yet, another hallucination, another way the world goes south on you. "So I killed her. All because of that thing over there. All because Gaius frakkin' Baltar didn't have the guts to stand up to the Cylons. Because he handed our fates over to the Cylons, I had to kill my Ellen." Because you held the temporary goals of the insurrection, and the Circle you knew you'd create, above the simple fact that you don't put guns in the Temple, and you don't play with scapegoats unless you're prepared to back it up.

Half the Golden Bough is about scapegoats. More: three-quarters. Baldur, Baltar, and Billy Keikeya. Iphigenia and Gina Six. Christ, Kara, Kore; Azazel, Aslan, Athena. Boomer, before her. Saddam. Three, lying in the waters of the resurrection for the last time, as an infinity of Cavils walked away into the darkness. Everything that breaks the world apart and realigns the universe happens on that altar. On the tenth day of Tishri the high priest presents a ram for a burnt offering, and two young goats for our sins. One's for JHVH, and the other is for Azazel. About God we know everything and nothing, but Azazel's like the Grace Kelly of the unseen, a mysterious celebrity. The devil of what happens after the world ends. So the high priest lays his hands upon its head and confesses the sins of the people, and they hand Azazel's goat over, and he's "led forth to an isolated region," and let go in the wilderness. That's how you do scapegoats. That's how you forgive, and wipe away the lines of salt that divide you, and knit yourselves back together. Grownups can remember it's only symbolic; it's children that don't realize the power of ritual in and of itself, and beg for concrete blood. This trial is evil before it even started. To kill something that's eaten the sins of a nation? A world? Twelve worlds? That's not just bad magic, it's bad faith. It's nuclear. You take what should be a funeral and make it a bloodbath, but funerals aren't for the dead: they're for the living. And the reason it's such a big deal, the reason scapegoat rituals are the scariest, wildest magic of all? Same reason that Tory's love of Laura, that Bill's love of Lee, that Laura's love of her

people get so fucking scary all the time. Same reason I'm so insistent that the personal is not political, but that the political is only ever personal. Same reason I call you citizen, same reason I love Sarah Porter, same reason I weep for Lee Adama. See how tired Bill and Laura are getting, carrying that weight. Nobody was built to carry that. Even Three was blinded and burnt out: how much weaker is Gaius? Or Lee? Or Kara? This isn't just his trial; it never was.

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"So Gaius Baltar made you kill your wife. That's why you hate him. And that's why you'd say anything to see him die... " And Tigh steps right inside: steps into that scapegoat trap again, thinking that revenge is ever appropriate. "You're Godsdamned right I would. I would do anything, say anything...to see that man die a painful death." No further questions. And across the water comes a song that only Tigh can hear; as usual, he mistakes this for the world, and thinks everyone else can hear it too. Getting closer to the Nebula, all the time. (I have no foreknowledge of whether that matters, but so far that kind of thing tends to be important.)

At Joe's Bar you can hear the news: protestors, arrested on other ships, being put down by Marines. [This has all happened before](#) and [will all happen again](#). At least this time Tigh's too drunk to get involved. And also crazy. Tory wanders in and wonders if this is what the common people do all the time, and if so, doesn't that explain a lot. "I don't know what I want," she snaps at the bartender. "You figure it out, you're the bartender." He's not Joe but he's a lot easier on the eyes. "Tell you what, I'll surprise you." Please, no more surprises for Tory! She's having a rough one! You can tell by the hell they've managed to make her look like! Sam and his fellow nuggets shout and play, but Tory only notices them when the song comes across the water, on the radio Saul was playing with. She and Sam lock eyes, and there's more information than I can decode in that look, but that's three people that can hear it, and a shipload of people that can't, and they all happen to be people I care a lot about.

What if crazy is catching? What if Kara's Heavy Raider was the first wave of something really scary? What if all my pseudo-psycho-intellectual bullshit is really wrong this time, and human



psychology is not in fact all about projection, and somehow terrible things are happening in everybody's heads? Or in certain people's heads? One from Command, one from the Administration, one Civilian-turned-revolutionary-turned-nugget? What's missing is a Prole, one of Chief's people, because of the whole class-war/upstairs-downstairs thing surrounding Gaius's current fuckupery. Cally should totally be a sleeper mind-controlled monster or something, that would be awesome. I guess maybe Sam stands in that role. But still: All three of them were at the top of the Insurgency, and all three of them are close to the President and/or the Admiral in one way or another. What if this is all science fiction after all? What if Chip Six isn't an angel at all, but just this same exact thing, looking a certain way? What if Lee's just not letting on that he's gone crazy too? Oh my God, what if Romo Lampkin is Tyler Durden and that's the reason everybody is being so shitty to Lee? WHAT IF SUNDAY NEVER COMES?

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Just kidding, I'm totally spoiled. By no less august a personage than Ronald Dowl Moore himself, for which he will never EVER be forgiven -- although the total balls-out awesomeness about to happen on Sunday night mostly makes up for it. In other news, back to the trial. Roslin tells the story of her execution roundup one more time: it was late, she was "grading papers" (by which I think she means "planning sedition and Baltar's murder" and/or "toking up"), they grabbed 200 people that were on a list with Gaius's signature. "Let us be crystal clear on this fact. You are saying that the defendant, Gaius Baltar, ordered your execution and the execution of 200 other people?" Roslin does that thing she does where whatever she's saying, no matter how banal or untruthful, seems like the truest thing you ever heard. I think it's in her eyes. "That's exactly what I'm saying." Everybody gets to muttering, Lampkin tells Gaius they need to talk, and I just figured out why this is boring. It's not just Cassidy's over...whelming... ellipses... or her plodding, overdone rhetoric (I swear if that lady asked how we measure loss one more time I was going to measure some bitchslapping up and down that courtroom); it's not even the fact that Hogan for once went over the top with his pirate impression and made Saul's hugest scene, maybe ever, seem scenery-chewing and silly. It's the fact that this trial is about one person, and until he's onstage, this is all

unimaginative and particularly repetitive foreplay. Lotta hustle, going nowhere fast enough. First-of-two bloat, in other words.

Baltar and Lampkin discuss the immediate discrediting of Laura Roslin and all the strength and character and wisdom and beauty for which she stands. "She's a fanatic, right?" is a particularly awesome line. Lampkin finally looks over at Lee, who's curled up on a sofa, looking dyspeptic. "You're awfully quiet." Lee doesn't really have much to say, but he doesn't have to: Lampkin's a thief. "See, your problem is that I'm a really good liar? And you're not. So let's have it." Gaius -- no slouch at lying either, as long as it's about himself, to himself, or to anybody else about himself, not that he would know he was lying -- catches it too, in his voice. Gaius is kind of hysterical all the time now? But in a whole new way where, like, instead of everything being the end of the world, it actually is kind of the end of the world, for him, so he had to bash up through the previously established ceiling of acting squirrely and build a whole new floor of crazy at the top, and that's where he lives now. "It's probably not even true," Lee protests, knowing damn well it is. "I like it already," Romo says, making the point once more that they're here to do their job, no matter the cost to their souls -- which is fine, as long as you're honest about it.

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"It's a personal matter. I doubt she'd ever say anything in front of me," he says, teasing them, teasing himself, backing out with his eyes open, waiting to be asked. Gaius goes shit-nuts, howling and begging, and Lampkin's mouth orders him to shut the hell up. This is about Lee. "Enjoying yourself so far? Having a good time sticking it to the old man, defending the most hated person in the universe?" Lee lies and says that's not why he's doing this. "No, you just decided to stand up for truth and justice and all those other lovely things we inscribe upon courtroom doors." Lee's unassailable and self-assured: that's Lee at his most destructive. Fighting for truth contains an element of yearning, not this arrogance. This is what led him to follow Roslin the first time, yes, but it's also what led him to start a firefight on Colonial One, the White House of humanity -- which is to me more "guns in the Temple" than putting actual guns in the literal Temple -- and to generally act in such a way that not even Laura could fully commend his actions, even when they were on her behalf. "Yeah.

That's exactly what I'm doing. Because I believe in the system. I really believe. I even believe that our lowlife pond scum of a client actually deserves a fair trial." Maybe if Dee hadn't left him earlier, those words wouldn't trip across his tongue quite so glibly; maybe if the rules weren't all he had left he'd be able to step up and be the man Romo Lampkin's begging him to be: the kind that signs with the Devil, but does so with eyes open. Because right now, Lee's writing himself a Baltar pass, signing it with a flourish; he's strapping on the Helo Suit, and that's not how Lampkin plays. Your betrayal means nothing, if it doesn't hurt you as much as it does your father. It's not the pretty picture he wants but the cracks in the canvas.

"The 'system,'" he says to the petulant child Lee is being, "requires that you tell what you know, which leaves you with one of two uncomfortable options. First, share the information, and in so doing, uphold the very principles that you claim to hold so dear. Or second, keep 'em to yourself, and prove once and for all your only purpose here is to jab your father in the eye and make a mockery of the entire justice system." Apollo responds to even this total, abject, horrifying honesty with a cocksure grin and astounding smugness: "That's very nice. Very, very nice, but I know why I'm here. I don't need to prove it to you, or to anyone else." This is what they all do, but it's especially what Kara used to do: get knocked down, lose another pillar, and you reduce yourself to as few dimensions as possible. The simplest possible identity. He's got nobody to tell him who to be now, and the person's he relying on is withholding, trying to get him to imagine it himself. The one thing he can't do yet, and he never could: Lee Adama never learned to breathe. You go looking around, for the source of the smell, the sound, the terror, the problem -- can't be you, you're just doing what's right -- you could go crazy; you don't know from crazy until you realize the smell's coming from you. You're the one that's singing, or screaming. And everybody knows it. That's horror. That's what he's asking for. That's what he's putting on display. Nobody cares where you came from, what arcane random rules you've decided to follow: they care who you are, and what you do, and why. He's so close to his existential crisis but it's him, he won't get there yet, because he's still got somewhere to stand, but it'll go like this because it always does. Nothing you do matters, so all that matters is what you do. Until then, it's lies all the way down to the part that

stinks: the part that needs to punish Bill for Kara's death, no matter how little sense it makes.

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"You're wrong. You need to prove it to yourself, or you leave that courtroom out there knowing you kept a secret that could've saved that man's miserable life. Now unless I greatly misjudged your character, that's not something that Lee Adama wishes on his conscience. So what'll it be, Major? Sit on the sidelines mouthing pieties, or are you gonna get in this trial and give us something we can use?" Or are you going to take it one step further than you need to, burning bridges and jumping off edges with aplomb, because that's what self-destruction looks like from this angle, now that you can't get anybody to hurt you quite like they used to? Because even your father's given up on you taking any amount of responsibility at all? Because from this angle, a disappointed romantic looks a lot like a sulking menace? Because without the romance of "Captain Apollo, Defender of the Universe," with all the cracks you can't ever face when the chips are down, what are you? The destruction of Captain Apollo is accomplished in three quick acts, each leading inexorably to the next, with a sort of dramatic unity that would make Aristotle proud. The road to Hell is paved with good intentions... but not too good. Joseph was right.

First the setup: Bill helps Saul into bed, groaning, and looks down at his dear friend, and begs him to stop drinking. The bad nights, when he gets like this. He can't take it after a moment or two, and changes the subject. From death, and hate, and all the other poems Saul Tigh can sing, in a single grunt. "Got some good news today. We found the radiation signature on the tylium ship. Just like the Cylon prisoner said we would." Good job, Saul. He's like, "Great, awesome." Adama continues to speak brightly. Well, for him anyway. He's not actively glaring, so the overall effect is that of Tony Basil doing back-flips around the place. "Being repaired as we speak. Mr. Gaeta estimates the Fleet's nine jumps away from the Nebula. Considering how long it's gonna take to fix the tylium ship, we're out...maybe three days. Three days out from the next clue on the road to Earth." Tigh's not so much interested in the road to Earth right now. Caprica stuck him a lot deeper than she meant to, because she doesn't know any better. Still. Saul begins to weep, pulling everything closer in, his senses

deranged by time and loss and sounds across the water. "Can't smell her. I can't smell her anymore, Bill. I kept her clothes...but her smell is gone now." What do you say to that? Nothing. Not your story. "I gotta go, Saul. Gotta retire." ("Do you honestly believe the Fleet will ever be commanded by somebody whose last name is not Adama?" asked Gaius. "Do you see what's happening? Jobs are starting to be inherited," said the Chief. "He's hanging by a thread," said Romo Lampkin. And all his children, he's losing them one by one. Gotta retire.) Tigh apologizes, weak and tired as a kitten, and Bill puts him off, kindly. "I embarrassed you. Made you look bad." Adama takes his hand firmly; Saul holds on as tightly as he can. "You're my oldest friend, Saul. You never embarrass me. Get some rest." Saul holds on, as tight as he can.

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Act Two: Lee's being nice enough, not snotty like usual, making -- as "a former CAG" -- the tactical suggestion of using the fueling ship as bait to lure the Cylons away from the Nebula. The Admiral is cool with him: "It's a good idea. I'll take it into consideration. Is there anything else?" Lee asks after the President, earning him a look of scornful shock. "Is she okay? She looked a little rattled in court yesterday." Bill exhales and tries to figure out a way where they don't have this conversation. "We can't talk about the trial outside of court," is the best he can do, following up with the obligatory "You know that. Or you should" dig. Lee thinks we're playing a game; Willow used to do this all the time and it drove me nuts, that yearning in their eyes to go backwards and for you not to be mad at them anymore. He's like, "I totally wasn't asking about the trial! I was asking about our happy family, silly!" Bill tells him to go fuck himself. "After what you did to Tigh, you're the last person I would consider to confide in." Lee's honestly confused by this one, and not in a disingenuous way either. "I didn't do anything to Tigh. He was drunk. It's really not my fault." Adama clarifies that he means Lee told Romo about Saul killing Ellen, which nobody knew but Saul and Bill, but which Romo figured out in a quickness because he sees the weak places best. Lee protests and is brutally rebuffed. "You're calling me a liar?" And a coward. Who didn't have the guts to "go after a man himself," but put "the shiv" in a stranger's hand and let Romo stab Tigh in the back. Which is lexically confusing, and also doesn't make sense. How on earth was Lee meant to be "going

after" Tigh period? When Bill says "Tigh," does he mean "Bill"? "And for what? Traitorous piece of garbage Gaius Baltar. Doesn't even deserve a trial." Scapegoats, again. Bill's hanging by a thread. This is anger, not justice.

"Are you done?" Most assuredly, Bill is done. "Then so am I," says the former CAG, taking off his wings and putting them on Bill's table, with a clash. My stomach flipped over; I started crying. Lee's a good boy. This is awful. This is a monstrosity, born of nothing you can fight; it's a question without an answer, it's a horror made of grief and loneliness and Romo Lampkin. "I will not serve under a man who questions my integrity." Bill takes the insignia in hand and snarls, "And I won't have an officer under my command who doesn't have any," tossing them in a drawer without even looking. I hate that. I haven't really felt that bad about the Admiral and Apollo until now, even though it's clearly been a big deal for awhile, but this literally makes me sick to my stomach. It's too wrong, it's too dumb, it's too much. It's too inevitable. "I'll see you in court, Admiral," snots Lee, and takes off. Watching these kids get consumed by their...

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When I keep saying it's not just Gaius's trial, I mean that literally. I mean that there's no difference between the Maelstrom and what just happened, what's continuing to happen to Lee. To Chief, throwing himself again and again on the engines he built with his blood. To Laura, or Bill. To Tigh, or Sam and Tory, whatever that is. This is what it looks like from Lee's angle: daddy issues, the law against the government against the military, "Apollo" and everything he means. Zak in the background, Kara in the foreground. The rules principles he hangs onto, his very oxygen, turning in his grasp like a serpent, changing shape like fire. His father replaced by this strange lying thief. Dualla leaving in a scene or two... That's all of it, right? Everything that makes him who he is? Turn the glass a bit and you have Three, dying to be reborn -- just one fraction of an angle difference and it's the same story. Boomer, going down in a hail of bullets over some other woman's crib. Helo, who finally made it back to Galactica after a lifetime of struggles, only to find it changing shape around him every week. Kara, flying faster than she ever had before. The Admiral's Lie of Earth, in which he now believes, gone rudderless in her absence. And Laura? You bet your ass. Her more than



everybody, and the hits coming from the most surprising, the most damaging places imaginable.

Act Three. Lee whispers into Lampkin's ear: "Let me do this." Romo asks "the Major," and don't think that wasn't intentional, if he's sure. Lee, looking beautiful and deadly in his lovely suit, smiles ruefully. "It's 'Mister' now. And yeah, I'm sure. It should be me." (This too, borne of his principles, his father's accusations ringing in his ears like a sound across the water: no knives in the back. Be a man.) Gaius complains that a glorified "security guard" (and don't think that wasn't intentional) will be serving however briefly as counsel; Lampkin shuts him down without even a look. "We're waiting, Mr. Lampkin," says Franks, and Lampkin introduces his "associate, Mr. Adama," who will finish the questioning. Adama spits nails; Franks allows it. This trial, I tell you what.

"Madame President, aren't you alive today because of Gaius Baltar?" She looks at him with that smile, the one that barely reaches her eyes but still comes off so soft. "I'm alive today because the insurgents managed to stop the execution." Right, from the firing squad, but: "Wasn't it Baltar who saved your life when you were dying from cancer?" The prosecution asks for relevance, and Lee begins to flounder (Bamber is fucking excellent in this scene; he always is, when he plays against McDonnell), so Lampkin mentions how Laura's a hostile witness, and asks for lenience. Adama spits actual bullets, but Franks again allows it. Lee stumbles to the point. "Um...did Gaius Baltar save your life when you were dying from cancer?" She admits that "Dr. Baltar" (and don't think her emphasis on his title -- not President, not Mister, but the thing he was at the time he was saving her -- is unintentional) and his "scientific knowledge" did save her life, indeed. Lee asks for specificity. "How did he save your life on that occasion?" The gallery is shocked into murmurs by her response: "He injected me with the blood of a half-Cylon, half-human baby." I still don't know if the Fleet knows about Hera, but I'm guessing they would, at least by the time Sharon was commissioned. They seem to have dealt with that well enough; if not, Helo's going to hurt Lee later, which will be nice. "And your cancer vanished." Completely. "During your illness, what sort of medication were you on?" She gives her best press conference grin, the one that says you and I both know and you're going to get a fight. It's her scariest grin, but in some ways her most

beautiful: this is how she does warfare. This is when she's Adama's equal on the field; Athena is a goddess of tactics and strategy and justice. That smile is the schoolteacher leaving, the lioness coming in. "You know [the you little shit is implied], I was taking a lot of medications at the time, and I don't remember all their names." And did she take chamalla extract? That little hum, the little "hmpf" she does, the one that means, "Here we fucking go." The one that means "another part of the world's about to fall down."

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The gallery mutters some more, as Lee asks about the hallucinations that are -- from the disquiet -- well-known side effects of chamalla; Laura agrees that she's heard that, that they're possible, that there are all kinds of possible, if improbable, side effects. She's getting better and better at this. I'm proud of her but I hate it too. I think the reason she scares me so much this season, why I've felt so much less connected to her since the Second Exodus, is because A) she hasn't been around, but mostly B) I can't tell when she's lying anymore. "Isn't it also true that the visions that you once described as messages from the Gods were actually the result of a pharmacological reaction from taking chamalla?" Roslin splits the hair, but it needs splitting; words are her realm: "The chamalla did enable me to see certain things that were foretold by the Scriptures. Things that will help this Fleet find its way to Earth." And back to the original hair-splitting, the first line of salt: "You of all people should know that, Major." It's a plea and a warning, and he can't hear either; his senses are deranged by the need to prove something very complicated. "Mr. Adama. Where are you going with this?" Lee asks the judges for just one more question, and draws close to her in the stand. She's so small sometimes.

"Please don't do this," she whispers, her eyes on his. Not for herself, not for denial. She's not denying anything to herself, that's the gift of a year in the schoolhouse, of admitting the possibility of a cabin near a river. She's not afraid of death anymore, and she's through hiding anything. She learned, a little, how to live, when Gaius Baltar saved her from dying. That's his gift, and she's still got it. She treasures it. She's not begging for herself, she's begging for him. For the two of them, the love they still have for each other, the understanding, that's telling her

right now that he's about to attack. For the Fleet, and the hopes of her people -- her people -- in the face of so much uncertainty, she will not answer this question until it is asked. She will give them what strength she has to give. But that doesn't mean by asking the question, you're not breaking her heart. Not for herself, but for their people, she puts her forehead at his feet: "Please."

"Madame President, are you taking chamalla at this time?" Her voice is tiny, her eyes welling with tears and frustration, so small in her chair. "Captain Apollo. You remember that?" He's dead. "I always thought it had such a nice ring to it." It was perfect. He was her Aurora: what Kara was to flight, to the warrior in Bill, Lee Adama was to truth and reconciliation. The first name across her lips, knowing that Bill still hates Joseph, was still Lee's, because her love for, and belief in, him are still so terribly strong. "I am so, so sorry for you now." Me too. He's a good boy. Captain Apollo is dead, in only three acts.

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Louder now: "Chamalla, Madame President. Perhaps dissolved in your tea? To mask the bitterness?" Not even Oracles can handle that awful taste. Adama's face is crushed with anger. "Don't answer. I'm putting a stop to this right now." The defense points out that if the witness is on drugs, it goes to credibility; Adama dismisses her altogether, near standing, near screaming. Objectivity was never his strong point, I know, but it hurts from another direction. Lampkin objects, calling it a cover-up. Bringing down the columns around them all with a simple question; Adama tells him to stop talking or face contempt. The other judges wow about how Bill has lost even his tenuous fake pretense at objectivity, and tell him to settle. "Madame President," again, "are you taking chamalla again?" She admits that she is: stares at it, doesn't look away. Lee looks away first, because there's more storm coming and he knows it, like a sound across the water. He wants to run. "No further questions."

Over the din she speaks. "Mr. Adama, aren't you going to ask me why?" It hits his shoulders first. "I'm sorry?" Then his eyes. "Why am I taking chamalla again?" Then his mouth: "It's not strictly relevant," he says, wanting more than anything to go home, but he doesn't have one anymore. "Well. Perhaps it's not relevant to

you, but it's relevant to me." Lee Adama begins to cry. He's mourning her, mourning Kara Thrace, mourning Captain Apollo. All these different kinds of love, burning up between the stars. "Go ahead. Ask me why. Finish what you started." There's not even anger in it, that's what hurts the most. The lioness is gone. This is a deal Laura's making with herself: can she be strong enough to break open another of the Fleet's dreams, tell them they're not safe again? Take on her most hated mantle? "Why are you taking the chamalla again, Madam President?" That old bad penny. The Dying Leader. The crowd screams; another part of the world falls down.

Dee's shoving shit in bags without looking at it; she's angrier than I've seen her. Of course she's leaving him now, even though a real person would have left him actual years ago; even though a respectable person wouldn't have married him in the first place, but whatever. I've learned you don't think too hard about why people get married or if you think they're up to it, because that makes you a jerk. So I retract that last statement. But it still does kinda piss me off that she has zero actuality in this scene. She's never been a hugely subjectively real character, she's always been a prop for some other character's mega-drama -- Bill, Lee, even Kara -- but this is kind of a joke. The only thing that makes it okay, to the extent that it is okay, is that one of Dee's finest hours was the whole "You think I'm going to make out with you after you ruined my ship?" fight with Billy, back to which this harkens, however circuitously. Lee's whining, dontcha know. "The fact that she's having hallucinations is relevant to Baltar's defense! That's the way the system works, Dee! The accused has a right to challenge the credibility of witnesses against him! That's just the way it is." All true. "The system is broken, Lee. The system elected that man to be President, and the system's trying to let him walk. That is not a system that deserves to be defended. It deserves to be taken apart and put back together again." All true, and not something she's ever been secretive about believing. She did her best to break it before and I hope she tries again, and again, and again, until they get it right. She's Sagittaron. I hope she and Tom Zarek become the fifth column. He prays to the Gods he could make her understand, and instead of slapping him into Cylon Heaven, she just explains once more: "Um, I do understand, Lee. And it's why I'm leaving." And she does! Awesome! He screams and bitches and whines and moans

about how she doesn't, but that's because Captain Apollo isn't running this show, and their marriage depended on both of them believing that he did. He never was, but as long as you don't ask the question you don't have to hear the answer.

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Press Conference on Colonial One, Tory standing by. The reporters ask how long she's known: about a week. No telling how advanced it is yet. They ask if she'll be bleeding the baby some more and she gets official. "You know, this is the kind of detail I'm not gonna go into now." Too ghoulish? Too hard to spin? "You know, we're looking at a game plan. I'll let you know when we have one." A reporter asks how her treatments will impact her job: "So far, it hasn't at all." Still smiling; still the schoolteacher she's conditioned them to see. "Are you currently taking chamalla extract?" Don't answer that, hisses Tory. "How often do you hallucinate?" asks another reporter, and Tory flips out. "All right, enough of this crap. We're done here." Roslin says her name once, quietly, but loudly enough that we can see this happening and know that Tory's not on message: that the cameras can pick it up, and take it to the whole Fleet. This isn't Laura Roslin, your President speaking. She was only ever kind and sweet and strong. "... You vultures can go pick over another carcass..." Tory nearly shrieks, and the other schoolteacher -- the voice you shiver to think about, the one from being a kid -- comes out. "Tory! Come here. I'll see you inside. Thank you." She sends Tory backstage, and smiles again, chuckling. "I'm sorry. Temperatures are running a little high in the fleet these days. Who's next? Karen." Karen Fallbrook, a lovely reporter, decides to go for it: "Madame President. How long do you have to live?" Not classy, not on message, not worth going there yet: this is a dying leader, not a dead one. She's only just come to terms with coming out of remission, only just dedicated herself to living after so long running, in fear -- and you're going to go there? And the teacher's gone, and the lioness is back, and Roslin leans over -- in my memory, impossibly far over -- the podium, staring straight into Karen's soul, with a smile that says it all: "How long do you have to live, Karen?"

Afterwards, she's sitting down to her paperwork. Tory congratulates her: "You handled that well." Laura informs Tory she sure as fuck didn't. "'Pick over another carcass'? As opposed

to mine? That's gonna look good in the press." Tory stutters, looks like hell some more: she doesn't even know why she said it. I know why: for the same reason Lee called Racetrack "Starbuck." Because mourning and grief and fear -- after all that running, after all that dying, those miracles, she gets handed this again? -- tangle up your tongue. Tory's senses are deranged. "What is up with you?" Laura finally spits. "You've been off your game for days. You're distracted, you're exhausted, you're just... you know, frankly, you're plain obnoxious." Tory's sadness falls, just as it did when she lost the baby and couldn't sleep for all her guilt -- this time it just has less distance to fall, due to looking like shit already: "I just haven't been sleeping very well." Roslin begs her to get it together. "Or I can find someone who can handle the press. As well as pull a comb through their hair once a week." DAMN! Tory about falls over in shock after that shit. Me too. Laura doesn't say stuff like that. She's going nuts here; this is her trial too. (On the podcast, and from the previews, it looks like canon that Sharon and Laura started this episode having the same dream -- actually sharing the dream, of Caprica taking Hera into her arms -- and you know I want more of that shit.)

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Tigh lies on the floor of his quarters, sound through the static, broken. Too much music and too many memories, and hurtling closer to the nebula with every drink.

Gaeta welcomes Helo to the CIC -- a new day, a new job for Helo. XO! That's hilarious. I'm serious about the lunch lady thing now. Helo swears it's temporary and assures Gaeta that the Colonel's going to pull it together. In all his time aboard Galactica, Gaeta has never seen anything remotely like that, so he's being as nice as he can when he expresses as little suspicion as possible about this theory. Down on the war table, Gaeta explains Part Two of Two. The tylium ship leads the Cylons to X place, opposite the Fleet, then recalibrates their FTL and jumps to rendezvous at the Ionian Nebula. No Cylons following the fuel ship -- so I guess the whole five-basestar freak-out was successfully avoided by 289er's jump, which explains Bill's order to leave a bigger space than usual between 289er and the Fleet on that last jump -- and they've forgotten about Galactica and the Fleet, too. We're down to three jumps 'til they presumably lead the Cylons straight to the Nebula, and thus the next road sign to Earth, and everything



goes haywire and changes forever, like every season.

Yep, I was right. I can tell from the look on Helo's face. So can Gaeta: "Uh, anything else, sir?" No, he was just thinking. Thinking about the weather on Caprica, how sometimes you'd get this smell in the air: "I mean, the sun could be out, not a cloud in the sky, but you'd pick up this smell and you knew that, um, something was just over the horizon. Weather's changing, Felix. We need to be ready for it. There's a storm coming."

Well, Jesus, is it a storm of anvils? Cute, can't exposit for shit.

And in Tigh's quarters, the trial continues: He scrabbles around in his cell, curled and skinny, scrabbling with his hands and fingers. His hands scratch out the beats, on his cell wall. His eye is gone. He scuttles like a spider. The song's coming, louder and louder, so clear you can almost hear it. The camera goes sickening, swooning again, all over, Hitchcock-style. He smells like shit and torture. He finally knows where the sound is coming from: it's coming from the ship.

# BREAKAWAY SONG

By **Jacob Clifton** | Season 3 | Episode 20 | Aired on 03.24.2007

*Crossroads, Part II* - New alliances bust out like chicken pox and everybody's brains get radically realigned in the wake of the trial and God's mysterious ways. The Final Five are maybe revealed. Oh, and Earth!

**Recaplet:** So you know that music that Tigh and Anders and Tory have been hearing? Well, Chief's been hearing it too. Meanwhile, Laura's undergoing Space Chemo and still having the dreams about Hera...only this time Gaius is there, and Sharon and Six have been having them too. Gaeta flat-out perjures himself before the tribunal about being there when Gaius signed the death list and saying that he presented to resistance at all. Gaius's recollection says differently, what with the gun to his head and all. Lampkin decides to go for a mistrial, and to that end he calls Lee to testify to his father's pre-conceived biases against Baltar. What Lee ends up testifying to is a laundry list of every misdeed anyone in the main cast has committed and subsequently been let off the hook for, in a monologue that both argues that Baltar is not guilty under the law and also that there is, in fact, no law at all. It turns the tide, as you'd figure it would, and Gaius is acquitted. Of course, now he has to live among the Fleet, so that should be fun.

With the trial out of the way, Adama sets the Fleet to jump to the Ionian Nebula, and upon jumping, the entire Fleet loses power and everything goes to hell. Gaius gets spirited away under a cloak by the squirrely reporter from last week and her associates. Six's dreams of the opera house intensify. The phantom music starts getting louder, and that music turns out to be "All Along The Watchtower" (stick with it). The music draws Anders, Tory, Chief, and Tigh (name one non-Roslin person who fought harder on New Caprica) to an empty room in the bowels of the ship, where they all WTF at each other for a while and realize that THEY'RE ALL CYLONS. So that's four. Tigh, for one, doesn't care what he is, he plans on resuming his post and defending the Fleet; Tory does the same, which makes their positions at the right hands of Adama and Roslin awfully tantalizing now. Finally, with power restored, Dradis picks up a massive Cylon fleet closing in. Lee, his flights of legal fancy having been satisfied,

straps on a flight suit and takes his Viper out. After following a phantom Raider (sound familiar?), he find himself flying side-by-side with Starbuck. Our Starbuck. And she's been to Earth. And she knows the way. And she's going to take us there, all of us. In 2008.

**Recap:** Previously, The Thirteenth Colony of Hanselgretalon left a buttload of beacons, Temples, signposts, diseases and other crap scattered across the universe in order to point the Fleet and Cylon Hordes to Earth. The last one led, via a torturous logic path that only Gaeta and Chief could possibly understand, to the Ionian Nebula, which, as they neared it, began to fuck up everybody that is cool. Since nobody named Adama is being cool right now, they didn't notice, and Roslin was too busy -- getting more cancer, more drug visions, and the cold incompetent shoulder from Bill -- to notice, but Saul and Sam and Tory were losing their marbles all over the spaceship. And in space, you know, that means they roll around. Adama was like, "Still no sign of the Cylon," which of course summoned a huge Fleet of basestars to Racetrack's location, but she jumped away in time to freak out the Fleet, but then for some reason the Cylons weren't a problem again, for like five whole minutes. Also of note: I finally recognize her without prompting.

With everybody else going shit-crazy, Gaius started feeling like his territory was being impinged upon, so he went even crazier. That'll show 'em! It even spread to some other people, like a cute and very intense lady with a son and the belief that Gaius is magic and can heal people with a touch -- rather than his huge wobbly brain, which is how he normally heals people. Huge wobbly brain and bad priorities, I should say, which is why he and Chip Six didn't auto-ignore the crazy cult lady at first sight. Speaking of Gaius Baltar, he's on trial for something or other having to do with the Fleet continually getting whittled down and whittled down for occurrences tangential to his poor decision-making skills. Sentence first, verdict afterwards: that's the wonderland of Colonial Justice.

After bitching out hardcore in front of the entire Fleet, nobody was feeling Lee at all, particularly his dad and his wife, both of whom kind of let him go pretty hardcore. Lee responded, of course, by resigning from the military, from being an Adama, from being a pilot, and pretty much anything not having to do

with being Romo Lampkin's creepy judicial prag. His dad told him he had no integrity, which was right by being wrong -- if all you are is integrity, then what you are is selfish -- and his wife told him that the entire system was bullshit anyway, because Alice doesn't live here anymore, which not even Laura's figured out yet. Lee finally got tired of punching his dad in the gut over and over, and went after mommy Roslin instead, because he is a little shit, because Kara's dead, because he has no idea who or what he actually is or wants to be. Just like the Cylons; just like everybody else. The road you take doesn't matter, if you don't know where you want to go: any road will take you there. He's still learning about words, so he doesn't understand that -- for the people at large, by asking the question and getting the answer -- he in effect just gave the President of Humanity (not to mention his father's one-day lover) cancer again. Which is to say, he just gave the Fleet cancer. With his words.

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On Galactica, Adama's trying to shave. The lights keep going out -- this only ever happens around Bill, have you noticed? -- and he at one point slaps the bulkhead by the sink, cutely. He cuts himself and grumbles, "Ah! Frak me." You and I both know what that means: cue the phone from Colonial One, right? At least, that was the joke I was already mentally writing, before the phone rang. From Colonial One. He answers, and we cut to Laura, lolling about luxuriously in bed. "Yell at me." Um. "I don't want to get out of bed!" He tells her she's called the wrong number; he's been thinking about going back to bed himself. Finally, he's got his groove back. Even with the weird "yell at me"/Maggie's invisible Marine talk, it's still pretty hot. She asks if he's okay and he laughs about her caring about his welfare, what with her cancer; the implication is not that she should only be thinking about herself and her cancer. The implication, I mean to say, is that it's all Bill can think about. "Yeah, I'm fine. I just cut myself. How are you doing?" She sighs, says she doesn't want to face "them," or anybody; she just wants to sleep in bed all day. "I think I stopped the bleeding," Adama says. "If you still need to be yelled at, I think I can give you some volume." See? Hot. But weird.

She laughs and tells him to give it his best shot. He half-yells, half-rumbles a half-hearted "Get out of that bed!" God they're adorable. She giggles and tells him that was nowhere near his best shot; she should be able to feel the glare coming off her phone like a tanning bed. "Get your fat, lazy ass out of that rack, Roslin!" (WHOA! Bill, I'm doing my best here, come on. I'd like to get you laid sometime before like Kara comes back.) Instead of slapping him through the spacephone, she chuckles sexily and goes into the whole "Yes, sir. Okay, sir. Anything you say, sir." And you know, if this were any other lady, or any other man, playing this kind of game, I'd be shitting it right now -- but Laura's got all the cards here, and she knows it, and she always knows it, and by her breeding alone you know there's no grain of truth to any of it, so it goes all the way around from being creepy to being adorable. And the way she thanks him, oh, and the way he signs off: "Don't let 'em see you sweat, Laura." They have groundshaking chemistry when they're not even on the same set. You know that the two halves of that conversation could have been filmed months apart, and they'd still... I dunno. I'm a big fan of not letting them see you sweat, and of Laura in particular not giving anybody anything they don't deserve, and I'm a big fan of their friendship as separate from their stalled-out affair, and it's just such an awesome start to the episode. I don't know. You know? Plus the concept of getting yelled at by him, or even worse, yelling at her, yourself? These are people unlike us; they are brave, they play poker with Tarot cards.

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The Chief lies in bed with Cally, humming the mysterious song. That's four. Man. I realllly wanted Cally to be one of the ones. I guess she still could be, but whatever. If it turns out Chief is a Cylon it will fucking kill her, and that'll be funny. I'll probably cry, I mean, you know me, but right now it's hilarious. However, if Chief is a Cylon, that means that Nicky is either A) Not his baby, or B) Chief loves Cally. Like in a "trumps Sam/Kara, trumps everybody but Helo/Sharon" kind of way. Which makes me distraught. Based on only this, my physical reaction to this concept that Nicky is a Cybrid, and what it entails, I would like to maintain the viewpoint that Chief is not a Cylon. No matter what happens in this episode. (How hilarious would it be if I was right and they're not Cylons?)

And I could be like, "Only my mindless, baseless hatred of Cally guided us through this dark time. That's amazing.")

Sam! And Tory! In their underwear! AprÃ's sex! Awesome, not least because they're technically the two hottest people left on the show, but also: of course. Of course this is happening. I wonder how much is the mysterious music and the weird networking it seems to be accomplishing with the Four, how much is the prenominate hotness quotient, and how much is the fact that they're the only two civilians (until recently, in Sam's case) apparently allowed free rein around the entire goddamn aircraft carrier, drunk or sober or going wildly crazy. Sam performs a favorite from the Sam/Kara playbook ("Please don't run off, we have to cuddle, I am perfect in my masculine neediness") and Tory sings her part well. For a sec, and then they commence taking off all the clothes they just put on, and getting hot and heavy some more. And then: the music. Tory's like, "Sweet Jesus with that music already," and Sam goes, "You hear the music too? That we already knew we both heard?" But then the pilots knock on the bunker door, and the oceans of skin get clothes put back on, and Tory sits very tiny on a bunk feeling slutty, and Seelix gives her the mean awful look that says, "And here I thought I was classy waiting two weeks before getting all up on his jock last week," and "I think I might airlock you," and, "Oh, am I going to write some riot grrl poetry about this shit right here."

Chief walks through the ship, listening to the music, placing his lovely face against the steel, like a child, eyes closed, innocent. Not even afraid, just listening as hard as he can, feeling something he can't describe. Something like water, and the sounds across the water, like jumping from the highest place in the hangar bay, like being a child again, carried by something larger than himself. Jam yesterday and jam tomorrow, but today: That thing he keeps looking for.

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Lee and Lampkin agree that a mistrial's their best option -- the long and short of it is that every witness they destroy (Tigh, Laura) is another brick in the wall, because the Fleet hates Gaius



Baltar. Of course, Gaius doesn't get it, and starts pissing his pants, so Lee goes a little... Lee, baby. Take a frakkin' nap. You are making it so very hard to love you, and that was never your job. That was hers. "You didn't hear what my father just called you," Lee says, losing the war by winning this momentary battle. Playing the Baltar game. "He called you a traitorous piece of garbage, a man who doesn't even deserve a trial." Lampkin's ears perk the fuck up; Baltar cries and whines some more. "Right, so now because we're winning we're losing, actually?" Gaius Baltar: Getting It Eventually, Since Time Began. "Perverse, isn't it? One of the reasons why I love what I do." So hot. Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it. Lee reads from another one of his grandfather's books, and in so doing reveals what a legal dilettante he really is -- and that his grandfather was a crap writer: "Forcing a mistrial may seem of little benefit to either side, but in fact, it can be a boon to the defense. The prosecution's shown their hand; at retrial the defense has all the tactical advantages, and the statistical chances of an acquittal rise by 25%." Joseph Adama, Trial Tactics & Strategies, page 273. Lampkin calls Joseph a "smart man," and Baltar goes... in another direction entirely.

Actually, you know what, hold up. In the beginning was the Word: Logos. The word is the face that floats on the water, and it's God: codifying, creating laws and language and the systems that we live in. Institutions, republics, contracts, everything that falls under Saturn, Chronos, Lear, Daddies back through time immemorial. Words are the way we share and know the male face of God. (Counter to the Word is the Sound, or the Feeling: the Hybrid, the Goddess summoned at the crossroads, the Oracles with their ceremonial bowls -- water resists the hard, fixed forms of the Word -- and their utterances that don't make sense until later, or until an interpreter can turn it back into Logos. A Leoben, or a male priest of Apollo at Delphi. Logos tells immediate and concrete truths; the Oracle tells better truths yet.) Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves. But essentially that's the problem here: Bill Adama and his son Lee are both rebelling against the mortal avatars of the Logos, which is always going to be your Dad, because of how brains and people work. If Lee lived here and now, he'd have bad credit and shitty dealings with money, get into fights with the cops; if he were Kara it would be...well, see "Tigh, S." (One of

Odin's names is All-Father; he gave up his eye for the language of water, and heard music nobody else could hear: women's magic.) As it is, Lee's just using the Logos against his father, the same way that by subverting the entire trial (and by misusing the masculine energy of war, throughout the series, even against Roslin; and by constantly readjusting his parental relationships with everybody, by the second, trying to be the best dad ever to an entire race) Bill himself is giving Joseph Adama the finger. Not to cram fifty years of psych and lit theory into one paragraph starting with the Bible, but I tend to think a lot of theory's the same game: getting back at Daddy by twisting what words are, what they can do. I'd like to see Lampkin's father one day.

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Anyway. "Yeah, well," stammers Gaius, trying to get all Sixy in response, "I can see why you'd want a mistrial." Lee hops right in there. "Well, that'd be the quickest way, wouldn't it, for you to absolve all your responsibility. Wash your hands of the whole affair." He points to Lee, saying Lee can get back to his life or what's left of it, and to Romo: "You get back to... wherever you get back to..." Love that! "And I get back to a cell, and I have to go through this all over again. I can't physically take that." The prissy, essential Gaiusness of that last line, the delivery of it, were so gorgeous I rolled around on the floor laughing like an idiot. "There will be a verdict!" Gaius shouts. And on it, the Fleet's soul hangs.

On the hangar deck, the radio is telling us about Tigh's freakout yesterday, which is in line with Lee's implication in the last scene that his conference with Bill and quittery took place in the last 24 hours. Racetrack's yelling at her nuggets about how they can't fly one of her Raptors until they know it all: "... Systems," she says. You can't operate a chopper, or the law, or your life, until you understand these things. The way they fit together. "Electronics, avionics..." Sam -- he's going for Raptors, I guess, and not Vipers. I like that, not only because of her but because of who he is: it makes sense -- hears the static and the sound. "...Navigation, engine controls, dradis configuration and calibration..." The senses, the way you find your way in the dark, the way you hear and see the voice of home: Sam notices Chief humming the song.

"...Basic FTL functions, autopilot gearing and propulsion systems..." The way you move: Sam stares at Chief and begins to wander toward him, body trailing behind a feeling he can't name. "... The best way to learn that is on a Raptor. And that means getting your hands dirty." How dirty? She ushers them onboard, in her best Kat voice; Sam is drawn across the bay. Chief's still humming. In his throat and in his body.

There's a kindness, a friendliness in Chief's greeting to Sam, as he continues to hum, that would have warmed my heart once; now I just wonder if with other sight, you could see the sparks between them, the linkup, the connection. I would have loved for Chief to lean over and just give Sam a big old sniff or something, you know? Wildcats. "That song you're humming. What is that?" They talk about the song -- something you can't get out of your head, hearing it everywhere, the boom box at Joe's -- but it's not so much a conversation as two hands meeting each other. The same power playing both sides of the chessboard: take a drop of water, or mercury, and divide it. "Like it's something..." "From childhood," they finish together. Nobody notices how weird it all is, how many levels this game is being played on, except for Racetrack, who yells at him. He's reluctant, pulling away from the Chief -- and who wouldn't be -- but he moves on, grinning as she yells. These dancers and their song, and everybody around them just keeps walking, and wonders why they're not in step. It's just they don't see they're dancing, yet. Not from this angle. They just can't hear the song.

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Sickbay, where Roslin's just finished her first round of "doloxan" treatment. You only have to see her face, the nausea and pain and grief, to know what we mean when we say that. "Ugh! Talk about the cure being worse than the disease," she says, trying to stay brave; he suggests bringing along a book or paperwork, next time. "It'll help keep your mind off of it, and it'll also help keep your blood pressure down." Knowing Laura, the paperwork would probably be a list of the people whose deaths rest firmly on her shoulders, or people she's planning on airlocking, or a list of other possible ways she can offer to fuck Bill Adama that will sail over his crazy old head. None of which are particularly calming. He

excuses himself gruffly -- "I do have some other patients" -- and leaves her to it. As soon as she's waved him off indulgently, she rolls over onto her side, hurting everywhere at once. "Oh, Gods..."

Back in the Opera House. Roslin and Sharon chase Hera through the halls again, and down to the Great Hall, where Caprica grabs her again -- and is joined by Gaius. They are lit up, beautiful, bathed in light. They enter the Great Hall together, closing the doors behind them. Laura wakes up screaming -- across sickbay, Sharon and Hera are screaming too. A scream like something being born. Cottle shouts, as Hera screams: "You're both freaking out at the same time?" Roslin makes her way across the clinic, dragging her drip stand along with her, locking eyes with Sharon: this isn't the first time. Sharon was part of her dream, of course. But then, Laura was part of Sharon's dream, too. "We need a moment. Take this off. Get this off me, please." Cottle wants desperately to understand; he's not alone. I think this -- whatever this is, this return to Kobol and the End of Line -- is the real mystery. I think the music, even Earth, are tangential, part of, working alongside. It's just too effed up and hearkens back to too many places and memories at once; it ties the human and Cylon together with blood, it involves everybody that ever crossed that line before now, including Gaius. Before the song.

Roslin enters Caprica's cell, Athena following behind, and tells the Marines to scoot. "We'll be fine. Shut the door." Roslin looks down at Caprica, so imposing even now, and apologizes to her for the shackles. Caprica's noncommittal but wants this woman's love: who wouldn't? (Besides I guess stupid old Bill, I mean.) "Were you with us a moment ago? In the lobby of the Opera House?" Caprica looks more unsettled than any Six has a right to be: it's fairly unbalancing merely to see. "I'll take that as a yes, by the look on your face." Sharon admits she and Hera were there too; Caprica protests that it shouldn't be possible. Cylon psychology is based on projection, not shared tripped-out freak-ins. Athena's like, "I'm a commissioned officer in the Colonial Fleet married to a nine-foot-tall slampiece from Caprica, large as life and twice as natural, with whom I have a preposterous child. Six impossible things before breakfast, lady." Roslin asks Caprica straight up if she was trying to get to Hera, and Caprica just shakes her head. God and children. "I just knew that I had to protect her with my life."

In Adama's office, Tigh's getting nutty all over the place about the music, how "they" put it in the ship, how he can hear it and nobody else. Bill's like, "Um, I'll look into it, kookoopants." Tigh tells him we've moved beyond the index card of someday on this one: "I am here telling you there is Cylon sabotage aboard our ship!" Bill asks Tigh to reconsider whether even the Cylons are fruity enough to "sabotage with music," and Tigh agrees that this would be a galactic amount of fruitiness. Bill promises again, and heads back to the trial; Tigh stands around his office hurling awkward, ridiculous anvils like cabers. "There must be some kind of way out of here..." he says.

You know what? Here's my hypothesis. Ron Moore's driving his car, or listening to his iPod, sometime around three years ago. No, he'd have to be not driving for this, because he's in a kind of drowsy state. And he's a hip guy, so he's got Dylan or Hendrix playing. I'm gonna say Hendrix. And he's thinking about how, hey look, after all that time on [Star Trek](#) and being the best writer on any of those staves, along with M. Taylor, and having worked his way right the fuck up the ladder, good old bad old [Carnivale](#) and the quiet times in between, he's created the best show ever seen. But what now? Can he let himself imagine two more seasons? Three more? What are the big turning points? And "All Along The Watchtower" starts playing, and somehow it falls into the fertile place his creative, dreamy mind is headed, and he can see it: the song, the intensity, the revelations, the stress of it all, putting everybody on the brink, turning everybody inside out, breaking more cameras, doing what he does best. Creating broken people and burning them pure again. It never comes out just as you picture it, but he already knows that, so he just gives in to this overwhelming, magic feeling that this is going to be the best thing ever. And you know what? That's what's on the tin. This isn't my favorite episode, because the dialogue in the Verheiden script is very WYSIWYG and tells you what's going on, there's no room for inference or play, just: tell me what is happening in the plot at this moment in time, and we'll move on. Let the crazy shit handle the rest, because it's going to end up awesome based on the five or six mind-blowing things that happen, and that's good enough.

Except that in order to define for the viewer the feeling that Moore had, in my hypothetical iPod happening, a long time ago, you need a lot less logos and a lot more magic, because by simply laying out the five or six mind-blowing things on the table, and telling us first what you're going to tell us, then telling us, then telling us what you just told us, you get further and further away from the awesome of the idea in the first place. Now I for a fact know that this is a set of awesome things that Moore still feels strongly about to this day, and that he wants our minds truly blown by them and for us to be very impressed by these things, and I am in agreement with the awesomeness of these things. And I don't know if it was the spoiling, or the uninspiring dialogue, or if this is all my shit I'm putting on the episode, but I don't know if I feel quite as freaked as I am meant to feel. At the end of last season, your stomach dropped because you knew what would happen next, and you were scared to see it. This season, I feel dropped into a hole that has no bottom, because I have no clue what happens next. And that is awesome. We'll have plenty of time to look around and wonder what will happen next. But I still wonder what this episode would have felt like with fewer edges, and more space between the notes.

And the whole quoting-the-song thing is a huge part of that, because we get it, we get it, we get it. It should be the least noticeable part of the entire script, the weave, but instead it sticks out like something large and looming, a bright red thread, in a way that takes you out of the entire setup. None of the actors know what to do with it, so they can't even really help weave it right, but this is a time where they shouldn't have to. It should work both as real live dialogue, and as the clues to the song, and in most scenes (although this one works as a disorienting non sequitur, the rest don't) it's not doing the double-duty it should. There is a lack of... shit, sorry. Enjambment, basically. It means what it is, and it does what it says, and that's the extent. And there are ways in which I kind of feel... cheated? That's not the right word. And I don't know if I have explained it sufficiently, because to say there's a lack of poetry is to go too far in the direction of criticism, and this isn't a criticism exactly, just an openness to the possibility that every story can be told in an



infinite number of ways, that every split second on that screen is the result of somebody's choice, and imagining other iterations of those, like a Hybrid, is fruitless, and sometimes the worst idea you can have, because the only person you're hurting is yourself. So shut up, Jacob. Back to the trial.

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"Do you recognize this document, Lieutenant?" Cassidy asks Gaeta. He does. It's the one he brandished in Gaius's face the day his heart broke: "A death list issued on New Caprica by the office of the President." Who signed it? Gaius. Was it a forgery? No. For sure? Yes, for sure. "Because I was there. I saw him sign it." Lie. Gaius starts to wig out. The smile on Felix's face would scare the entire Cylon Fleet: so disingenuous, so hateful, so broken, so vengeful. Of all the people in the Fleet, that document is Felix's problem: the second he saw it, he took their names onto his back, scratched in like scars. He was the one who put "democracy" back in place, he was the one who got the Presidency back for his hero, he was the one who watched it fall to shit almost instantly around him, for a year he watched this and could do nothing. For who knows how long, he sat under the Cylon thumb, and watched Caprica and Gaius together again, and tried to think of ways to help the Resistance, and then back onboard, he nearly let the Circle take him down: to buy back for the Fleet what his ideals took from them. There's a reason Tigh and Laura were questioned together: it's so Gaeta and Lee could take the stand together, in this episode. What Gaeta was, Lee is: a person whose ideals brought down the world. A person who hasn't learned to be good, but not too good. And what Gaeta is now, I don't want anybody to be. "I saw him sign it," Gaeta says, over Gaius's screams; Cassidy asks him to describe a scene he never saw. "The Cylons brought the document into the presidential office. They had already selected the names. One of them, I believe it was a Three..." Gaius is spitting now: The gall! The unmitigated and dÃ©classÃ© cheek! (I'm extrapolating from his spitting sounds. I'm like Leoben!) "...Gave the list to the President and said, 'Here are the people that are going to be executed. Please sign this. He looked at the list. He saw all the names. And then he signed it.' Did he protest? 'I mean, did he argue? Did he offer any resistance whatsoever?'"

Flashback to New Caprica, that day in Colonial One when they shot her through the head and promised to do the same to him. How angry Doral was: how afraid. Of God. Now look, see, how far we've come. See how far from stem to stern the angel has to reach. Ron T. writes, after explaining what an "unrep" is: "Usually an aircraft carrier has a 'breakaway song' that's played over the loudspeaker as both ships peel away from each other, practicing what would take place if a nasty bogey showed up. Or maybe a Raider." And Doral's still screaming, and Gaius is taking the only stand he's ever taken: and now, here, it's being taken away. Sybarites confuse the body with meaning, with the real; serial ladykillers confuse the act with the meaning, the speech with the sound, the messenger with the message; the nature of modern life is obsession: Gaeta breaks his heart again. I bust Felix's no doubt well-trimmed balls about the gay thing every week, but he doesn't have to be gay to be in love with Gaius Baltar. My love for Gaius Baltar is the least gay thing I've ever done. Felix doesn't have to be gay to get fucked by Gaius: we all were. But whether Felix is gay is not the question and it never was. The question is: does Gaius know the difference? Between Kara and Lee, between Laura and Bill, between Felix and Gina? His heart and his dick have always had some trouble communicating: why shouldn't this hurt just as bad? Felix loved Gaius Baltar as a hero, and Gaius Baltar loves most to be loved as a hero. And now Felix is taking away the one heroic moment the man ever gave us. This is how he's brought low, by love and respect removed: this is Caprica seeing Gaius walk out the door with Three. This is Sam tossing Kara's dogtags in her face. This is Lee and Bill Adama.

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"Oh, Felix. Oh, Felix, what are you doing?" Gaius about bitchslaps Cassidy, retreating from her as she brandishes the order. That octagonal piece of his heart that everyone can look at. "Gaius, Gaius," Lampkin Seacrests, "We'll get him in the cross." Over shouts from the tribunal for Lampkin once again to get his crazy ass under control, Gaius screams hilariously: "Look, it's no secret! The whole Fleet knows this man tried to stab me through the neck, and you missed! Butterfingers!" Man, I love my guy on the edge. Lampkin apologizes; Lee gives him a steely STFU. ...And then Lampkin releases Felix. No further questions. Gaius wigs out

some more, and Franks finally gets to gaveling, and they dismiss the witness. "Listen, it's your word against his right now. If he's decided to perjure himself, there's nothing we can do to change that now. We're going to have to adjust our strategy."

And that strategy? Move for mistrial. Gaius screams a bunch more, both exciting and new, and one of the judges says in some kind of accent, "Oh, behave, Dr. Baltar!" The mistrial, of course, comes on the grounds of "somebody" and their total lack of objectivity. Bill's like, "That's a serious thing to say, and about whom?" Um, dude. You. Obviously. And to prove it? "...The unusual step of calling Mr. Lee Adama to the stand." Lee's of course like "The fuck?" and promises not to testify against his dad; Lampkin's like, "Either way, get that ass up there." Cassidy excepts and excepts, and Lampkin assures the tribunal that he can think of seven precedents right this second, for counsel testifying at trial. Franks gives it to him. Lampkin asks if it's been four days since the meeting Lee talked about earlier; asks if the Admiral expressed an opinion about whether Gaius deserved a trial. Lee stresses out and won't talk. "All I'm looking for is the truth here, Mr. Adama. Let's have it. I'm waiting. Answer the question. You swore an oath as an officer of the court. If you don't answer the question, you halt the entire system of justice..." That word again. Lee screams. "-- What frakking system?!" The judges try to chill him out, but this is it. The Maelstrom. He either becomes a man in the next five seconds, or he's dead meat. His wings are clipped permanently. "All right, all right. I'll try something else. Do you believe that the defendant deserves a fair trial?" Yes. "Aside from the fact that everyone deserves a fair trial, I also happen to believe that he is not guilty of the charges and should be acquitted." Cassidy freaks, and the judges are swayed -- after all, defense can do this in closing statements -- but Adama sure as fuck wants to hear it; another judge agrees. So why acquit?

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"Come on," Lee chuckles. What Bamber accomplishes here, with this ribeye of a mouthful, is nothing less than amazing. It's a lot of words and not the kind of words that naturally come from our boy, but they're good at telling you what's been going on the

whole time. As in, the whole series. I'll let him talk. "Did the defendant make mistakes? Sure, he did. Serious mistakes. But did he actually commit any crimes? Did he commit treason? No. I mean, it was an impossible situation. When the Cylons arrived, what could he possibly do? What could anyone have done? I mean, ask yourself, what would you have done? What would you have done? If he had refused to surrender, the Cylons would've probably nuked the planet right then and there. So did he appear to cooperate with the Cylons? Sure. So did hundreds of others. What's the difference between him and them? The president issued a blanket pardon. They were all forgiven. No questions asked.

"Colonel Tigh? Colonel Tigh used suicide bombers, killed dozens of people. Forgiven. Lieutenant Agathon and Chief Tyrol? They murdered an officer on the Pegasus. Forgiven. The Admiral...The Admiral instituted a military coup d'etat against the President. Forgiven. And me? Well, where do I begin? I shot down a civilian passenger ship. The Olympic Carrier. Over a thousand people on board. Forgiven. I raised my weapon to a superior officer, committed an act of mutiny. Forgiven. And then on the very day when Baltar surrendered to those Cylons, I, as Commander of Pegasus, jumped away. I left everybody on that planet alone, undefended, for months! I even tried to persuade the Admiral never to return. To abandon you all there for good. If I'd had my way, nobody would've made it off that planet. I'm the coward. I'm the traitor. I'm forgiven."

"I'd say we're very forgiving of mistakes. We make our own laws now, our own justice. And we've been pretty creative at finding ways to let people off the hook for everything from theft to murder. And we've had to be. Because...because we're not a civilization anymore. We are a gang. And we're on the run. And we have to fight to survive. We have to break rules. We have to bend laws. We have to improvise. But not this time, no. Not this time. Not for Gaius Baltar. No, you...you have to die. You have to die, because...well, because we don't like you very much. Because you're arrogant. Because you're weak. Because you're a coward. And we the mob, we want to throw you out the airlock because you didn't stand up to the Cylons and get yourself killed in the process. That's justice now. You should've been killed back on New Caprica. But since you had the temerity to live, we're gonna execute you now. That's justice!"

Two things. Thing One is that the director should be put up against the bulkhead and smacked for the shot that follows, which is the entire gallery shaking their heads and going, "No! No!" like the rhetoric has convinced them all that they're entirely different people than they were a second ago, and they're horrified by the implication. Which, I'm very wary of reaction shots to speechifying, because they're productional masturbation of the most mirror-gazing sort. God, how many times on [The West Wing](#) did some character deliver some admittedly ass-kicking piece of rhetoric penned by Sorkin, only to have Schlamme point the camera at some wise character going, "Man, that was some good writing." I hate that so, so much. I want to be the one shaking my head, going, "NO!" I don't need to see a bunch of punter day-playing Vancouverians shaking their heads like I'm too stupid to see which way the wind is blowing. Embarrassing, grotesque, stupid shot. Also, it's like a quarter of a second long, and Crazy Gaius Cult Lady is front and center, so it's not totally wasted nor is it that unbearable, but Jesus God. Thing Two is: So awesome!

"This case...this case is built on emotion. On anger, bitterness, vengeance. But most of all, it is built on shame. It's about the shame of what we did to ourselves back on that planet. And it's about the guilt of those of us who ran away. Who ran away." And that's Bill, and that's the whole beginning arc: we were so busy wondering if the man at the top could forgive himself, we forgot about Lee, leaving Kara to Hell and worse. Those were his people too. His people. "And we are trying to dump all that guilt and all that shame onto one man. And then flush him out the airlock and hope that that just gets rid of it all. So that we can live with ourselves. But that won't work. That won't work. That's not justice." It goes out of him. Captain Apollo rises from the ground and begins to weep. "Not to me. Not to me." And Lampkin grinning Cheshire, knowing the weak places: "No further questions."

Cassidy tells the judges once again that this is bullshit, and they agree, but we already won and everybody knows it. Even Cassidy's like, "Thank you for registering my existence." Franks

offers her the chance to cross, and Cassidy almost laughs angrily. "I have no question for defense counsel." Word. This trial! And then...Lampkin rests. Franks calls an adjournment, Lampkin mutters that this is a glorious moment indeed for jurisprudence. Roslin congratulates Cassidy on a job well done, while both of them look like they took bites out of the same lemon.

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"All rise." Franks explains the other side of the "system" speech: "Like everything human, justice is imperfect. It's flawed. But it's those very imperfections that separates us from the machines. And maybe even makes us a species worth saving." I like this undertone, it started with Roslin's "preserving the culture at all costs" speech to Chief, back in his episode. The idea that you can't just start over fresh, but you can't stay the way you are: you're stuck. What do you do when you can't get out? Change into something else. "Gaius Baltar. After carefully weighing the evidence, this tribunal, in a vote of three to two...finds you not guilty." Everything goes to hell. Some scattered applause and boos before the riot begins. Roslin grabs Tory and bounces; not out of fear for her safety but because she's breathing fire. Gaius addresses the press, hilariously: "I always knew that I was going to be acquitted, but the fact that I have been found innocent shouldn't disguise in any way that this trial has been a total pantomime!" Things go to hell squared, in the confusion; people getting beat up by Marines, administration getting smacked around. Lee calls out to his father, to save Gaius Baltar.

"I knew right from the very start that if there was a way to demonstrate the sheer -- What's the word I'm looking for? Hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is the word I'm looking for -- hypocrisy of the prosecution's case, then really, the judges had no other option but to find me not guilty." Lampkin and Lee look upon him, grinning and sickened like twins. "Well, your boundless confidence provided us with great solace throughout the proceedings," says Lampkin archly. Gaius refuses to take the hint and thanks them from the bottom of their grossed-out hearts; Gaius takes it too far: "On a personal note, if I could've seen the Admiral squirm just a little bit more, it wouldn't have hurt." Lee gets right up in his personal business and tells him not to push it.



Gaius shrinks and addresses Romo, asking for his personal counsel. "I've thought about maybe doing a book tour around the fleet. And there's the publishing rights. And there are issues about my security, where I'm gonna live, what I'm gonna do. Since we've forged this great relationship during the trial, I thought, you know, who better to think about..." Gaius spent months on the Basestar learning to project; still can't read a room for shit. Lampkin winks, almost, in his gleeful hate: "Actually, now that the Fleet's legal system is in place, my not-so-inconsiderable talents are required elsewhere. So I'm afraid...this is the end of our journey." He was never there for you: it was Lee he was after. Gaius finally realizes how totally fucked he is. "What...what about me? Wait a minute, wait, please. Think about this for a second." Don't think about Danny Noon; don't think about how you have to make up what you are when they take away what you were. How dirty your hands have to get. "Where am I gonna live? What am I gonna do? How am I going to survive?" Lampkin tells him he'll land on his feet: the thief talking down to the joker. It's done.

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Waiting for Romo's shuttle, Lee asks him if he knew what would happen, on the stand. Of course he did. "I knew you were an honest man, Mr. Adama. Much unlike your grandfather." Kinda Babylon 5, kinda Deep Space Nine, that, but then Romo walks away, strong on his pins; Lee looks down at the useless, abandoned crutch. Dude is good.

Roslin looks like she's about to puke up actual chemo all over Bill: "Gaius Baltar is innocent. Just the sound of that makes my skin crawl." He tries to wiggle: "Not Guilty is not the same as Innocent." But it's not opposed, either: innocence is the opposite of experience. (Are you experienced?) The opposite of Not Guilty is Not Guilty: it's what they all are. It's what you are. It's what I am. Scapegoats most of all. "It must've been particularly difficult for you," she says, still resisting. Don't ask the question and you won't have to hear the answer: "What, you just...couldn't get the other two guys to budge?" He's quiet; she already knows. "...You voted for his acquittal, didn't you?" Bill's libido is like "FUCKING A, DUDE." Bill nods. "Hate to say it. Defense made their case. The prosecution didn't." She touches him but without touching. Gaius

Baltar is a traitor. They both know that, regardless of the outcome of this trial. "No one's asking anyone to forget. Or to forgive. But we have to look to the future." To the system that can't be remade and can't stay in place; to the place Lee wove for them, from all the truth in the Fleet: Dee, and Lampkin, and Gaius, and Laura. Bill, and Tigh, and most of all Kara. Fixed isn't the same as unbroken. It's what we all are. Laura leaves, to feel sick and rageful, to heal, to knit herself back together, to do the numbers on a Laura/Lee ticket for the next election. Should she live that long. In the space left by her exit, Adama orders Gaeta to jump to the Ionian Nebula.

In a Galactica corridor, there's a small man, long dark Jesus hair, beard, with a box of things, rushing to a place he doesn't know about, on a road he doesn't recognize. Pen, "papers." Dreams, words, wishes, plans. Plans for breaking and remaking a system in his own image. A system that didn't need breaking; just healing. He came back from the fairies with his hands empty: this is a life. Gaius in a box, with nowhere to stand. The people push by him: some of them, pilots and Marines, shove past, but he doesn't mind that so much. It's the ones that don't notice him at all: those are the ones that hurt.

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Jump coordinates distributed, sir, and all Fleet ships showing green, for jump formation delta. They jump. All fleet ships reporting in, sir. Gaeta scans on dradis: "Let's see what's out there." What's in here: Laura Roslin, on CIC again, doubled over. Dying Leader? Or proximity to the Nebula? Or a song that only she can hear? The lights go out, everywhere at once: in CIC, and in Galactica, and across the Fleet. Everyone goes dark. The music comes, again, louder and louder: that old song they used to play. The Fleet drifts, in the dark: nowhere to stand.

In the hangar bay, they're doing what they do: Racetrack summons her nuggets, wondering if they make it out of this. Cally calls for light. In CIC Dualla and Gaeta check in, calling systems: the voice of home, its nerve center, working together. Pilots and ECOs and a million deckhands, mustering in the dark. Laura and Bill look at each other, the light soft as candles, and will each

other stronger for this next round. Gaius looks around, wondering if this is them, coming to get him again; coming to save him from anonymity and the knives in the dark. Back into the dreamtime: two female figures, shrouded in darkness, look at each other and then back at him, and advance. Is one of them Tory? He turns, in fear, and a woman appears to him, from nowhere: it's Intense Cult Lady, with a hand out to him. "Gaius, it's okay. Come with me." The two figures in the shadows are on with her; Mary, Mary, Martha; they drape him in a safety blanket, to hide his face, the effect is jarringly New Testament. He begs to know where he's being taken; she tells him the truth. Home. "To your new life. Here. Come on."

Caprica dreams, in her cell: she and Gaius stand at the parapet of the Final Five, Hera in his arms. They step toward the five flags, bright as stars, but they are empty. Above and behind, before frescoes of creation, stand the Final Five, looking down from the balcony.

In the hangar bay, they're doing what they do: Racetrack and Cally saving the world. Chief hears the music. "There must be some kind of way out of here," he murmurs, before the bugs stop jumping. The song is a riddle: it runs backwards. First the princes keep the view, listening to the wind and the wildcats, like songs across the water. Then the litany of questions, problems, whining: Adama and Roslin drinking wine, none of them along the line knowing what it's worth. And then the angels, knowing this is just a joke, they've been through it, that's not fate. That's just the way it happens. Begin at the beginning and go on 'til you come to the end; then stop. It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards. Cally begs her people -- her people -- to be careful where they walk: "It's all live." Tigh, Sam, and Tory begin to sing; everybody dances toward the assigned place, at the assigned time. Away from their posts and into the unfolding.

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"There comes a pause, for human strength will not endure to dance without cessation; and everyone must reach the point, at length, of absolute prostration." Lewis Carroll said that. He would have loved this show. Sam and Chief greet each other, in the

equipment room. Linking up. Tory begs them to tell her it's not happening. The look on Chief's face, as he thinks of Boomer, in the water: "Huh. So that's it. After all this time. A switch goes off, just...like that." Nothing so terrible, nothing so horrible. It's not the smell coming from you, it's learning you've been singing all along. Boomer, singing to a Raider, a song from childhood. This is what it looks like unfolding: like everything already looked. Just rubber bugs jumping, all along.

Tigh appears at the door, hilariously: "Whoa. Oh, no way. I don't believe this. I'm not buying this. This is a... this is a trick. Come on, we're not... we're not..." Tory begins to hum the song. This part was kind of rough to watch without laughing, even though they're not bad at humming. Tigh tells them to stop it immediately. To deadbolt the doors. To lock themselves in with it and save the Fleet. He quickly disintegrates: "Forty years in the service. Forty years. Two wars. Combat. Locked in that dungeon on New Caprica. Ellen. My gods. What about Ellen?" Sam's feeling him, anviliciously as well: "No, no, no, no. Not after all this. Not after the Resistance. And the Occupation. And after watching my friends die one after another for frakking this?" Tory reaches out to him: the link. He shrugs back. "You stay the hell away from me. You all just stay the frak away from me." Chief's been ready for this moment since before New Caprica was named. Since the first time he shoved old Brokeback in the bug room and covered her tracks. He's ready. There is grace in this. "Sam...it's true. We're Cylons. And we have been from the start."

The power outage was Fleet-wide, Admiral. It was also simultaneously restored to all ships. And now there's dradis, Gaeta's telling us: "Massive Cylon Fleet on intercept course!" Power up and spool, emergency jump. Which will, of course, take twenty minutes, thanks to the powerdown. Right where they have to be. Condition one, throughout the ship. "This is not a drill. All Viper pilots report to Vipers immediately. Inbound Cylon fleet. I repeat, action stations, action stations. Set condition one throughout the ship. This is not a drill." It never is. This is a breakaway song, and nobody can even hear it.

"Gods," says Tory. "What are we gonna do?" The Four stare and stare; Tigh reaches higher. Saul Tigh begins to rise. When you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. When you don't know where you stand, you have to find the ground for yourself. That's the one thing you always own, no matter what they take from you. The road he's on... Not to belabor, but... When Saul falls, it's on the road to Damascus. God appears to him and says, "I am Jesus, whom you persecute: arise, and go into the city." And Saul is blinded, like Odin, and he sees the unseen and learns to speak the language of angels. He becomes somebody new. (He dies and is reborn. We just do it differently, on our side of the salt.) And all the things he thought he knew, all the people he thought he could hate with impunity, all the scapegoats he could kill, all the monsters he fought for forty years were just him. Looking back at him through God's eyes, singing a song only he could hear. This was never Gaius's trial; of us all, he's the only one who was never on trial here. And Saul is forgiven. You have to laugh. There is infinite grace in this: "The ship is under attack. We do our jobs. Report to your stations!" When the smell, the song, the sound is coming from you, then the song is all that matters. The rest is up to you. This whole season has been just one question: when we preserve humanity, what are we preserving? When they take away everything that makes you, when your entire self is taken apart in the unfolding, when the angel shows you the door and begs you to walk through, you have only one choice. It shines bright as five stars, and burns twice as hot: "My name is Saul Tigh. I am an officer in the Colonial Fleet. Whatever else I am, whatever else it means, that's the man I want to be. And if I die today, that's the man I'll be."

The song begins to play for us now, without static, without confusion, without anything but the message, burning five by five: it's a breakaway song, but only by the rules of logos, the laws of war. We know a better song; took twenty episodes, took fifty-three, took ten thousand years, and so much salt, to hear it clear enough. But we know a better song.

Cally, adorable: "Where the hell have you been?!" Chief shakes his head: "I'll tell you later." She is going to have a full-on fucking litter of cats at that point, isn't she? That's going to be hilarious, and really really sad, and Athena best watch her hot little ass, because Cally doesn't like anything in the middle of her "us."

Cally needs to interrogate seriously her concept of "us," but I've only said that like a billion times already; her concept of "them" is a Maelstrom all its own. I don't envy her. Saul and Chief lock eyes. The link. There is nothing terrible in connection: Cylon or not, it's only relief. Learning to be human is learning to own the ground on which you walk, and learning to be Cylon is learning to believe in an "us" bigger than you can imagine. Bigger than the universe. Learning to be a deckhand is learning to get your hands dirty; being part of the "emerging aristocracy" is learning to get your hands dirty, too. The Olympic Carrier will always be with us; so will the Pegasus. The only thing worth anything, human or Cylon, is the link between the nation called you and the nation called me: it's the engine where God is made. It's the engine angels must machine.

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So too these Four, these heroes, this very frakkin' sexy shape of things to come: Saul Tigh, Sam Anders, Tory Foster, Galen Tyrol. Galen means "physician." Athena, and Caprica, and Hera. Laura, perhaps. Kara, one assumes and hopes. Those that walk between worlds, seeing in bifocal, finally focused, hearing the music of God. The obsession of life is nature, how about that: discovering and describing. Trying to love everything around you. Maybe all these Helo and Adama Suits, the Kara Suit of Special Destiny, the Chief Suit of Labor Disputes, maybe they were all helpfully provided for us, after all. Maybe we were the ones trying them on, all along. Boomer and Athena, and Laura Roslin. Tory and Sam. Cally, and Cavil, and Three, Gaius and his angels: maybe we were being prepared, focused through so many lenses one by one, so that we could handle this. Human psychology is based on projection; we've been running from the attack for years, too. Waiting to rest.

And these Four, these newborn people, that can dance in the link and still claim the ground below their feet; these Four that can lay down their burdens of fear, and hatred, and self-loathing, and pledge the work of their hands to their people. Their people. These Four take their stations, hold the line, and take back their names again. Bill greets Saul in CIC, and Saul promises he can count on his oldest, closest friend. Through all the bad nights,



when he gets like that, they held on as tight as they could: Lee and Sam couldn't stop loving each other if they tried, from that angle. Tory takes Roslin's arm, and the love in her eyes could stop you cold. "I'm here if you need me, Madam President." And across the deck, Tory and Tigh lock eyes. The link.

As long as things are fucking awesome rockout stupid great, they say, why not make Jacob cry? Lee grabs his flight suit and helmet from his locker, and runs to the deck. It's no use going back to yesterday: he was a different person then. Why am I only getting emotional about Lee Frakkin' Adama these days? If I knew him I'd slap him to hell and back. I think it's all the civics talk. What we do and what we don't do. How the only way you can be sure about the lines between yourself and everybody else is to draw the circle as wide as possible, and serve it all with the work of your hand. How goodness is the strength to do what's right, not what's allowed. The pursuit of excellence. He's like the only person on this show that wouldn't look at me like I was crazy talking like that. That's probably why I hate his ass. That's probably why I secretly love him best, too. Human psychology is based on projection. Captain Apollo is dead, shed like a Suit. On the other side of Bill, and Joseph, and Kara and Carolanne, on the other side of Roslin's carcass and all the apologies, all the love, burning like that door, there's Captain Apollo. He's not one of the Four, in this moment, and I don't think he's number five, but you tell me the difference. Then tell me how it matters. He's a good boy, we never forgot that. But there's no such thing as too good, just the wrong angles. He just needed to remember. Thank the Gods he did.

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Three is the number of the Goddess, of change, of language that passes understand. Three women stand in a cell in which they've all spent time, for trusting God, in their time. Maybe this time Caprica's the prisoner, and Laura's the interrogator. The players change, the story stays the same: three women, a prison cell, a dream, and a child. Four is the number of God, of logos, of stability. It's the ground on which we stand, so that we may sing songs and spells and write our poems and have our dreams. Four people, representing the four classes of the Fleet: pilots,

command, administration, knuckledraggers. All of them crossing lines, all of them changing too fast to see clearly. In every three there's a secret fourth, missing: the Devil, or woman, or whoever we hate most today. That's Gaius, in the Opera House, rushed away in a moment by his women: the agent of change, destroyer of two societies, two cultures. That's Gaius, tying the two groups together now: Hera's Crazy Math Father, the first person to hear this song, when the angel first came to him. It's beautiful, I think, the symmetry. And Gaius means "Earth."

Helo notices him, up in the sky. "Who's in Viper 3?" The song is gorgeous, exactly what I would want to hear if God and/or our erstwhile robot masters were to take over my hearing apparatus. It's weird in that it gives you flashbacks to the soft guitar sounds of Enterprise, a bit, but over the vrooming spaceship porn, it's all right. It's a cover -- I imagine Jimi or Dylan is way expensive -- but it's all mixed up with the muzak and the poundy drums and the sitar and it's just ... correct. Cheesily correct, but everything's happening so fast. "...Plowmen dig my earth: none of them along the line know what any of it is worth..." Apollo calls in a bogey: an invisible Heavy Raider, perhaps? An angel, a will o' the wisp? A white rabbit? Leading where? "...No reason to get excited,' the thief, he kindly spoke..." They say the messiah comes when you least expect it, like a thief in the night. Lampkin's a thief, and Gaius is a total joker. But Gaius is a thief too. Apollo loses his bogey and stares all around. Not even Lee's dradis can identify him. Or her: Everybody watching says just one name, softly and under their breath, afraid to break the spell.

("..."But you and I, we've been through that, and this is not our fate..."") For a pilot there's always a bogey in the bug room. Sometimes they stop jumping. ("...So let us not talk falsely now, the hour is getting late ...") And there it is. There she is, the bogey, the monster that's chased him across the stars, teasing, fading from view, taking him down into heavy atmosphere and up into the sun, naked on a virgin world, under the moon. She stands on the bank of the river, bringing life to the shore. Kara Thrace comes up alongside.

Ever tried to fancy what the flame of a candle is like, after the candle is blown out? It's like this: just one star, burning, like a storm, from an angle you couldn't ever see before. Like her eyes, looking at you with more love. Fixed, but not unbroken. Her Viper's so clean, so fresh. Her grin is full of love and wisdom, just as in life. Never innocent, never guilty: The dawn, breaking. Again.

Every love story is, first and foremost, a mystery. That means riddles. So first the princes, the wind and the wildcat, like a sound across the water: as the song plays us out, before the credits shine with a gift from them to us, KATEE SACKHOFF as STARBUCK, so GET OFF OUR ASSES, we're treated to a vision of our own. Back, back away from the two Vipers, flying in tandem, as they always have, even when the angle showed they weren't. Up into the sky, out of the Nebula, away from the Fleet, back through four Basestars and a Battlestar, away from that old anvil war ("Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"), and back, and back, and then -- after just a moment to breathe, after so much beauty, after all we've been through -- straight forward, faster than Kara, watching galaxies and then solar systems and then planets and then her: most beautiful, the endpoint, the glory of Earth. And all along the watchtower, she's just the view we have to keep. Like Bill, and like Roslin, before him. The nature of obsession is life, untwisting: All those wrong turns, suddenly wrenching straight; all those mistakes not mistakes, but just the way things had to go.

But then! Then the conversation, the litany of questions, answered before he can start. He says her name. "Don't freak out," she laughs. "It really is me." He speaks softly, afraid to say the name, afraid to break the spell. "It's gonna be okay," she says, like the dawn waking you softly. "I've been to Earth. I know where it is. And I'm gonna take us there."

I believed. Admit that you did, too. I'll see you next year, and I'll miss you 'til then. Thank you for everything. Boom boom boom and all that. But first, the angels, knowing this is just a joke, knowing they've been through it -- that they're going through it now. Knowing "fate" is just bad weak logos, unequal to the task, just a bad angle on the way it happens. On it happening, now.

Knowing it's going to be okay, whatever else happens.

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So lastly in the riddle, the first part. The best part: in the moment of the opening of the door, in the moment before he comes to life again, in the moment before he can finally breathe, in the moment before she leads him out of the storm, Kara Thrace comes up alongside Lee Adama in the sky, and smiles perfectly.

"Hi, Lee," she says, and dances us back from the abyss, again.